HULNE ABBEY,

A NOVEL,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY MRS. FREDERICK LAYTON,

FORMERLY MISS JEMIMA PLUMPTRE.

DEDICATED BY PERMISSION

TO

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

Minerva's sense in thee we find
With Juno's lovely form;
Venus herself in thee's outshone,
In every grace and charm.

VOL. II.

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HULNE ABBEY.

CHAPTER I.

Ah! sure a pair were never seen,
So justly formed to meet by Nature;
The youth excelling so in mien,
The maid in every grace and feature.

A GREAT accession was made to the society at Matlock next day, by the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. William Perton in their own chay. Mrs. Perton had been monstrously scared coming down the great high hills; but she thought "Matlock seemed quite a clever place, the drawing-room was larger than lady Haresfield's, and the eating-room nearly as large; to be sure the furni-

tude was not so genteel, but there was a sight of company to make it very lively and agreeable."

Molly was determined to be very smart, and cut a dash upon her excursion; so she had a habit made with a load of buttons, and a hat with a feather put round the edge.

As Mrs. Silke's brother lived in the same county with the Perton family, she desired Mr. William Perton to introduce her to his wife (for she thought she might sometimes get a dinner there upon a pinch) and Molly promised to be very free and agreeable with her. Mr. Hatton thought he should find a great deal to quiz in Mrs. William Perton, and determined to be very gallant to her: as soon as tea was over, he proposed to shew her the zigzag walk, and the heights of Abraham. Mrs. Perton was beginning to be in a violent rage at the sixpenny turnpike, she had never been used to pay for walking, and appealed to Bill if he did

not think it monstrous aggravating: he began to look black as thunder, so Mr. Hatton, to put an end to all further troubles, paid eighteen-pence for the three. Mrs. Perton was in raptures as she proceeded: well to be sure, she thought it unpossible there could be such a nice place; crinkum crankum, in and out, up and down, and such mortal high hills she never see'd in her life before: she should have enough to talk of when she got home.

Mrs. Perton inquired for some particulars of the three old ladies who sat at the tea table by themselves. Mr. Hatton said, "You must know some particulars of Mrs. Silke, as she is your countrywoman." Mrs. Perton replied, "She had heard she was a rum one, and she thought she dressed a strange figure." "That is so striking," said Mr. Hatton, "there has been a caricature taken of her: it is called the *Welsh Swindler*: you must know she goes every

year a tour of some weeks, in a hack chaise with her maid: two or three years ago she went into Wales, and when Sal got to St. A——p, she found herself growing seedy: so she bethought herself, who she could borrow of: she did not know the Dean, but she thought if she went to him, and said she was Mrs. Silke, Sir Charles Silke's sister, he could have no objection to lend her twenty pounds; and away she trooped to the Deanery. The Dean knew nothing of the family, but he thought this uncouth figure, and odd style was not much like a baronet's sister, and Miss Robinson having been about not long before, thinks he, this is a swindler. I will not be swindled out of twenty pounds: but, supposing she was an object of distress, and not being disposed to send the hungry empty away, he offered to *give* her five pounds; but Sal was quite enraged at this, and indignantly refused it, and bounced out of the Deanery in a great

huff: still the Dean remained convinced she was a swindler, and related the circumstance to a large party, as a good joke, who dined with him that day, amongst whom was one who knew Mrs. Silke, and vouched that was no impostor who had been at the Deanery, but the genuine Mrs. Silke; and a fine roar of laughter ensued at the mistake.

The skinny old maid with the sharp nose and rheumy eye-lids, is the greatest beauty of the age;—here Mrs. William Perton set up a horse-laugh: "you will not let me finish my speech," said Mr. Hatton, "I mean in *her own eyes;* she is a defamatory Quixotte, going about seeking whom she may devour; she falls *pell mell* on all alike; but with most virulence upon beauty; and she is her own Dulcinea, and contends against all the world;—she is the most superlative beauty that ever was, or ever will be born; and she is as flinty-hearted, *as she*

says, as the heroines of Romance, killing whole legions of lovers with the brilliancy of those heart-killing eyes, set in eye-lids of rosy red. Never was woman so beset with lovers as she has been for the last fifty years of her life: she now adds another joke to this romance; she is going to be a great fortune; heiress to Mr. Newton; I heard her letting off this lie in the morning to some ladies who knew nothing of her or him; had she seen me, she dare not have let fly such a bouncer in my hearing: she was speaking of his great fortune and great style of living, and he had called in all his servants, and informed them she was to be his heiress; and they must behave to her as if she was his daughter; upon which the housekeeper, the *valet de chambre*, the butler, the man-cook, the laundry-maid, *&c.*, *&c.*, *&c.*, began vying with each other who should pay most court to this immense heiress. Now, do not you suppose Mrs. Long

Wellesley's fortune will tumble into insignificance before this heiress? and the rich, rich, rich Maria Frost, who is so charming, all must love her, if she had not sixpence, will from henceforward sink her into annihilation. I will tell you the truth; Newton is a poor old curate, worth a few hundred pounds, and about a hundred pounds worth of old furniture; and this vast retinue of servants, ordered to obey her with so much deference, is one old female servant; and Newton will as soon leave the little he has to me, as to Molly Frost. So much for Mrs. Molly Frost, and her veracity. But when she makes herself the heroine of her tale, she thinks of Mary Queen of Scots, the beautiful Lady Coventry, or Isabella, Duchess of Rutland, and describes them as herself.

Mrs. Lydia Crabtree is very much ashamed of her companions, and their style of travelling, and would cut them if she

could get any body of better fortune to patronise her. She is something like Poll Casterton, almost wore off her legs in going about from house to house. What a fool Poll Casterton was: she had got into such high society, spending her time so much amongst nobility; but she spread about lies, and wrote anonymous letters, and disgusted them all. There should be some asylum built for these restless tabbies, they are worse in society than lunatics.

When Mr. Hatton had gallanted Mrs. William Perton home, he went and joined Dr. Stukeley, who inquired what elegant new acquaintance he had made: "She is Mrs. William Perton," he replied: "you know that family are not famous for marrying well, or making chastity a requisite virtue in their wives; this was a sort of parish match, the mother was *artful*, and he *weak*; his family trusted to his pride and avarice, keeping him from such a match: but the

moth got into the candle, and could not escape: they affect now to be much pleased with the match, and to be very proud of William's wife. The Hobnails are a very old family, they say. "I dare say they are," said the Doctor, "I should think as old as Tubal-Cain:" "she will make some fun," said Mr. Hatton, "when she begins talking and telling her adventures."

The next afternoon it was settled; Mr. William Perton was to drive Mrs. Silke in the chay to Wirksworth; and Mr. Hatton and Mrs. William Perton were to go on horseback, and drink tea there for a pleasant variety. Mrs. Perton told Mrs. Silke before they set out she thought her ——— would just fit her place in the carriage: one of Bill's sisters had gone in it one day, and she was so skinny, she went slush, slush about in the place, she did not half fill it. The afternoon was sultry, and Mrs. Silke drank a great quantity of tea at Wirks-

worth, and when they were about two miles from the place, it began to have such an effect; Mrs. Silke wished Mrs. Perton's contrivance for her carriage had been to adopt the Spanish fashion, and have a chaise percée; as it was not so, she was necessitated to desire Mr. Perton to drive as fast as possible to the next cottage; where they were no sooner arrived, than Sally bustled into the house with all speed, and asked for a *pot de chambre;* but woe and alas! there was no such utensil in the house. What did they use, she asked? They made use of the chimney-corner. Had they nothing to lend her? They produced a butter-boat. "What the deuce," said Mrs. Silke, "do you bring such a foolish thing for; have you got nothing bigger?" So casting her eyes about, she spied a pail. "Come, do bring me that pail," she said, "I can wait no longer." So the pail was placed in the middle of the room, and Sally just seated upon it, as Mrs.

William Perton entered, who wanted to know what was the matter. She set up such a laugh at the exhibition of Sally in the midst of the room, seated on the pail, that it was heard by the gentlemen in the road; and Mr. Hatton was curious to know, upon her return, what the joke had been. Mrs. Perton was communicative, and told him the particulars.

Mr. Hatton related this adventure to Doctor Stukeley, who threatened to attack Sally upon it, and vowed it was the milk-pail she made use of.

The next morning the three tabbies entered into a conference in Molly Frost's room, which was adjoining to Mr. Hatton's: the partition was thin, and he happening to be in his room, was so fortunate as to overhear the conversation. Molly Frost began with saying it was certain Miss Townshend and Sir Edward Courtney were going to be married;—" a nasty puss," said Mrs.

Silke, "I cannot think what men can see to admire in her; and she will be my lady too." "Aye," says Mrs. Crabtree, "men will flock about some women so, without any reason; and other women, for the life of them, cannot get married. I really think the more eager women are to be married, the more men shun them; they are such perverse wretches. I wonder what sort of wedding night-cap Miss Townshend will have.

Mrs. Lydia asked her companions if they had found out if there was any intrigues in the place? "I think," said she, "there must be some amongst some of the gentlemen, and some of the ladies-maids." "Yes," said Mrs. Mary, "I suspect there is; I think Mr. Hill seems very fond of one of the servants in the house; her looks are suspicious: I shall have my eye on them, and prevent their coming to an intrigue." "What! do you really think

there are any intrigues going forward i the house?" said Mrs. Silke. "If I can find out any I shall take care to make it known to every body, I promise them: which of the maids do you suspect, Mrs. Frost?" "I suspect Betty, the housemaid," she said, "I think the men seem very fond of her; if there is any thing in it, I don't think they will escape my eyes." "Have you heard," said Mrs. Silke, "that great fat porpoise, Mr. Legge, is going to be married? I really think he will smother his wife: and old Bigge too is going to be married to a pretty Miss West." "Aye," says Mrs. Lydia, "so I hear; he had much better marry me; I am sure I should suit him better than Miss West. What can he think of that girl for? I dare say, she is in debt; she always wears such good clothes. It's very odd, men can't find out a plain prudent woman is the best sort of wife. I am sure I should make a good

wife to any body." "How can you endure the thoughts of a husband," said Mrs. Mary, "men are such odious libertines! I have such an awful dread of marriage: I rejoice so I never suffered the men to tease me into marrying." "How can you endure the thoughts of cheerless celibacy?" said Mrs. Lydia. "Does not Dr. Johnson say, 'an ill-assorted match is better than cheerless celibacy; and matrimony has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures.' I'm sure I should be monstrous glad of a husband: I collect patterns of wedding night-caps, and I do all I can to get a husband; men are so mercenary, and so perjured." Mr. Hatton here began to sing loud enough for the tabbies to hear, 'for ah! she found the grapes were sour,' which alarmed the grimalkins, and broke up the caterwauling.

When the company assembled at dinner, Dr. Stukeley inquired of Mrs. Silke, if she

caught cold the night before, with her ride in the open carriage; she said, she was very hardy, she never caught cold. "You were much charmed with a romantic cottage you passed by, I hear, and got out to admire its beauties; the woman who supplies Mrs. Cummins with milk lives at that cottage, and there has been quite a piece of work below-stairs to-day about the milk; it is so thin, no cream will rise; they cannot guess what is the matter with it: the woman protests *she* has done nothing to it." The idea of Sal Silke seated on the pail, now presented itself before the company, and was too much to stand with gravity; a shout of laughter ensued, in which Mrs. William Perton bore an audible part. "Lawk, Mrs. Silke," she said, "never mind the Dr.'s jokes; I never care if people jeer me. Mr. Hatton would make me tell him last night, what I laughed at in the cottage; and so I suppose he has told the Doctor. Mrs. Silke

did not like to be laughed at, and rather nettled about; so the doctor to turn the eyes from Sally, asked Mrs. Mary Frost, if she was not rejoiced Mr. John Clarke had got such a handsome addition to his fortune ?" "Yes," said Mrs. Mary, "it was owing to me he got it. I asked his uncle, Mr. Bayntun, how he should leave his fortune? He said, neither of his nephews should have a farthing. I told him, Mr. John was a very amiable young man, and he ought to leave him something handsome; eight hundred a-year at least: so Mr. Bayntun said, as I spoke so well of his nephew, he should make his will directly, and leave him eight hundred a-year; and he ordered John to call upon me to thank me; for if it had not been for me, he would have had nothing." "Mrs. Silke," said the Doctor, "are any of your friends, the Miss Dentons, married yet?" "No," said Mrs. Silke, "and I think it very hard upon them, for they

have danced cotillions now for three years at Bath, and I'm sure they jump and kick very much." "They swam, sprawled, frisked, and languished," said Mr. Hatton, "but all would not do." "But they cannot jump into the temple of Hymen, for all that," said the Doctor; "it is close barred to some women: as the temple of Ceres is forbidden to males, so is the temple of Hymen close barred to some women." "Yes, that it is indeed," said Mrs. Lydia with great asperity; "I should like to know what it is influences men in the choice of a wife?" "Beauty," said the Doctor, "good temper, good fortune, and good manners. Now, Lydia, have you these qualifications to bring with you? You seem to think a smart night-cap the only requisite to bring to the temple of Hymen: my friend, Mrs. Silke, thinks a jump and a kick is sufficient qualifications: and what does Mrs. Mary Frost think? What do you provide your-

self with?" "Oh!" said she, "I have an awful dread of marriage; I shall never suffer myself to be tricked into making any promises.

When the ladies retired after dinner, Mr. Hatton told Mr. Hill of the suspicions Mrs. Mary Frost had of him, and it was determined to raise a laugh at the tabbies upon this subject. Mr. Williams, who was short, could personate a female well, and was to be dressed in the clothes of one of the housemaids. Mrs. Cummins was let into the plot, and provided the dress; the rest was left to the two gentlemen to execute. Mr. Hill observing Molly Frost fixing her rheumy eyes upon him at tea, to see if she could physiognomize in him any appointment with Betty, the housemaid, drew Mr. Williams near her, and said in a whisper for her to hear, "I've succeeded with Betty, we've agreed to meet to night in the passage leading to the water-closets;

and if we are disturbed, we can run in there; they saw from Molly's face she heard; and, as soon as tea was over, the tabbies went out. Molly Frost got then into her room, which was in the passage above mentioned; it was thought though Molly had an awful dread of marriage, she had not of intrigue, and would be all eyes to make her discoveries. Mrs. Frost was bursting with her news, and as soon as the door was opened, "I am right," she said, "that nasty fellow, Hill, has agreed to meet Betty, the housemaid, to-night in this passage; and if they are disturbed they are to run into the adjoining closet." "Then I shall take care to be there," said Sal Silke, "I'm determined to find it out, and to-morrow morning every creature in the house shall know it; and I shall insist upon Mrs. Cummins turning Betty, the housemaid, out of doors directly; I've no notion of suffering such pusses." "And,"

says Mrs. Lydia, "I will come and watch in Mrs. Frost's room, and we shall have two witnesses then here." "Aye, do," said Mrs. Mary, "we'll watch them well." "Aye," said Mrs. Silke, "and I shall give it them well, when they come into the closet; they shall have it on both sides their ears." Mr. Hatton overheard this, and communicated the intelligence to the gentlemen. It was determined to make an underplot to the original plan: the ostler was to be sent into the closet to Mrs. Silke; he was to pretend to take Mrs. Silke for Martha Batts, whom he had appointed to meet there; and to counterfeit drunkenness, to excuse his not finding out his mistake; if he was very rude and amorous, Dr. Stukeley promised to give him a dollar." "And" says Mr. Hatton, "I will give you another, if you will take any liberties with the other two tabbies; Sal will scream and roar, and they will run to

her assistance, and your pretended drunkenness will excuse any liberties you may take with them: do not spare the Tabbies; the ostler grinned, and bowed obedience.

Night came, and Mrs. Mary and Mrs. Lydia took up their station in Mrs. Frost's bed-room, and Sal Silke trooped off to the closet: Mr. Hill and Mr. Williams, dressed as Betty the housemaid came into the passage: a violently loud kiss was given; Molly softly opened the door, that she might *see*, as well as *hear:* Mr. Hill's arm was round Betty's neck: Mrs. Lydia slid her face in to have a sight; the lovers grew very amorous. "Only see," said Mrs. Mary, "how fortunate it is we shall detect them, and I hope that nasty fellow Hill will be made to leave the house; I declare I shall not think myself safe under the same roof with such an abandoned profligate." The underplot now began to work; the ostler went creeping into the water-closet,

and Sally was determined to keep still as a mouse, to have ocular demonstration of what she wanted to find out: the ostler went creeping on to the farthest place, where Sally was laying *perdue* to catch the amorous pair: he caught hold of Sally, and gave her a violent embrace, saying, "My dear Martha, how I love you." Sally paused, uncertain what part to act in this unexpected attack. She thought if she screamed, and brought people about her, her virtue would be called in question; and what candour could Sally expect, who was so merciless to others; if the charity she met with was only what she dealt out to others, Sal Silke knew it was all up with her virtue; the protection her age afforded her, she did not consider; so Sal kept as still as a mouse: perhaps, as the country girl said, when she was asked, in a similar situation, if she had made any resistance, "No," she replied, "for I had a mind to see *how far* his impudence would

carry him." So Sal Silke, encircled in the arms of John Ostler, might be seized with a similar fit of curiosity: certain it is, whatever might be her motives, Sally was silent; the inamorato grew more alive, and tore off Sally's handkerchief; it was one of her best tippets; Sally *then* thought it time to scream out, "I shall be ravished! help, make haste!" The ostler knew the more ridiculous figure Sally made, the better he should please his employers; so he gave her wig a pull on one side, and her cap a pull in the contrary direction: by this time in rushed Molly Frost, and Lydia Crabtree; the ostler now turned to Molly, and gave her a violent embrace, at the same time pulling her handkerchief from her neck, and her head he pulled two or three different ways; Molly set up an uproar, "I am ravished, I shall be defiled." The ostler let her go, and seized upon Mrs. Lydia, and whilst she was encircled in his arms, in rushed Dr. Stuke-

ley, Mr. Hatton and Mrs. William Perton. "Lord bless me! ladies," said the Dr., "what is going forward? have you complaints in your bowels? and what can have endangered your virtue? Ladies, did you appoint the ostler to meet you here? or what is the meaning of all I hear, and see? My friend Mrs. Silke has her cap on one side, and wig on the other, and her neck laid bare. And the demure Mrs. Frost! why you do not seem to have an awful dread of intrigue; what has the ostler been doing to you? there is evident signs of warm work having been going forward. I fancy he sings, 'How happy can I be with either, so I'll have you all three together.' This is certainly the ostler's seraglio we have got into; first, he tears the handkerchief from one, and then the other; that is quicker work than throwing the handkerchief. But, Ladies, what an odd place you have chosen to carry on your amours in: love in a hollow

tree, I have heard of; but love in such a place as this I never heard of before; if you had given me a hint, I am sure my room should have been at your service.

Mrs. William Perton set up a loud laugh at the exhibition the tabbies made: "Why Mrs. Silke and Mrs. Frost," said she, "you look for all the world as if you were both fuddled." The tabbies were silent, they had completely fallen into the trap they had laid for others. The Dr. now pulled off his coat, and wrapping it over Mrs. Silke's bare neck, "my dear Mrs. Silke," said he, in the tenderest accents, "let me be your knight-errant; no giant shall dare to attempt ravishing you whilst you are under my protection: I fear you have experienced that men are such odious creatures, when they proceed to take liberties with the fair sex, that they will touch them with something more than their naked hand; but I hope there is no danger of a little tell-tale com-

ing, to record the loves of the closet." Sally was quite chop-fallen, and struck dumb; she allowed the Dr. to lead her out with his coat over her bosom, and one hand gently drawn within his arm. Mrs. Cummins was coming to see what was the cause of this uproar, but the sight of Sal Silke set her into such a fit of laughing, she was obliged to sheer off.

Mr. Hatton was no less gallant to Mrs. Frost; coming up to her, "I see, Mrs. Frost," said he, "you are a disciple of Eloisa:"—

Not Cæsar's Empress will I deign to prove:
No, make me mistress to the man I love.

I did not expect, Mrs. Frost, a woman of your outward decorum of manners, would have ventured to have carried on an affair with the ostler so publickly; and really you have been hard upon him: three at once falling upon him is almost Mother

Shipton's prophecy: there are two waiters you might have added to the party, would have made easier work for him: permit me to supply the place of your handkerchief with my coat: that blaze of beauty unveiled to my sight, is almost too much for weak flesh and blood to withstand. The coat was now wrapped round Mrs. Frost's lovely form. "Let me advise you," said Mr. Hatton, "the next time you ladies take these little frolics, to have the gentlemen's little apartment the scene of your caterwauling; you may not then be driven to take up with only one; that is poor piddling work for ladies of your transcendent beauty."

Mrs. Frost said, "I cannot unravel who that gentleman was who is so violently fond of me; he gave me such an embrace, he almost squeezed the breath out of my body: I was not aware I had made any conquests since I came here." "I will unravel the

mystery," said Mr. Hatton, "the gentleman is John Ostler: I dare say he is some nobleman in disguise, come here to make love to you." "I am quite agitated," said Mrs. Frost, "I thought it was all over with me." "Lean on my arm," said Mr. Hatton, "I will support your agitated frame to your room."

Mrs. Lydia had sneaked away as soon as she got free from the embraces of the ostler, and was already in her room. Mrs. William Perton stood in a loud laugh all this time. "Well, to be sure," said she, "I do not know what to make of all this: these old women never can be fond of the ostler, but what could they be doing here with him at this time of night, if they only come to do their business: Mrs. Silke seems always troubled with a looseness, but its so comical what the ostler could come here for; and to be sure he'd tousled 'em about finely: they need not be so ready to find

fault with others, as far as I can see. I wish Bill had come, for he loves to have a laugh at Sal Silke, as he always calls her; and I'm sure I shall never forget her as long as I live: to be sure she looked like a crazy Betty; and Molly Frost, for that matter, did not look no better; I do not know what to make of these rum ones." Being now left alone, Mrs. Perton quitted the scene of action, and the company were by this time all retired to their rooms.

The next morning the Dr. would have the ostler into the breakfast-room, when all the company were assembled, to make an apology to the ladies for the liberties he had taken with them: the ostler excused himself on the score of being fuddled, and mistaking them for Martha Bath; and he hoped he had not displeased them. "John," said the Dr., "we ought to know how far matters had gone, to be able to say if you ought to be pardoned: but, however, if the

ladies pardon you, we must hope the worst has not happened." So violent a fit of laughter was now set up, the Dr. thought the joke was carried far enough, and dismissed the ostler; and then bowing to the Tabbies, "Ladies," said he, "if this day nine months godfathers should be wanting, I shall be at your service." Mr. Hatton made a similar offer; and Mrs. William Perton setting up a shout of laughter, said, "she would be godmother, and help with the baby-linen." The Tabbies almost made up a blush. "Mrs. Lydia," said the Dr., "I found you so fast locked in the ostler's arms, I began to think you had at last found a man in the mind to have you: *thinks I*, she will have to wear a wedding night-cap at last: but, Ladies, how unconscionable you were, for all three to fall upon one man; and Mrs. Mary, who talks so much of her awful dread of matrimony, I did not smoke she had a love of intrigue: who could have thought

of that demure fair caught in such a place in the arms of love; and there was plain proof, from the dishevelled appearance of the ladies, warm work had passed: they had got to close quarter. Mrs. Frost, you should not venture to watering-places; you see how much you are the idol of the men." "I am so lively," said Mrs. Mary, "when I am with my friend Mrs. Hesketh, Mr. Hesketh so often says to me, Mrs. Frost, you are the pleasantest creature in the world to have in the house; I wish my wife was like you, you are always ready to go out in the carriage with me; and you have such spirits you keep me in a constant laugh: and Mr. Hudson always cries me up as a pattern in dress: if I was to put a shoe upon my head, I am sure he would admire it; and he says I am the best rider on horseback he ever saw. Mr. Hudson always set me to pull the grey hairs out of his head." "Fye, Molly," said Dr. Stukeley, "I hope you do

not do so grossly indecent a thing." "Yes but I do," said she, "where is the harm?"

The company now dispersed: the three Tabbies set out upon a walk, and Mrs. Jackson and Mrs. Wright looking out of windows, the latter said, "Who are these?" "Molly Frost is one," said Mr. Jackson, "do not you know her jig? The fat one is Mrs. Silke, you may know her by her bottom: some of the young men have their fingers itching to be spanking her; Mrs. Crabtree you may know by the swing of her arm."

The company were assembled in the drawing-room when the Tabbies returned from their walk. An arrival had come in the interval between dinner and tea, one of whom was Miss Canning, a very fine woman, with elegant manners: she had a slight acquaintance with Mrs. Silke, and seeing her come into the room, went up to speak to her; Sal bounced off to the other end of

the room, without speaking a word, and seated herself by Dr. Stukeley. "What's in the wind now, Sal?" said the Dr. "I suppose Miss Canning has been getting buttons made at a charity-school: had I not known her amiable character, and seen her appearance was quite different, I should have supposed from your bouncing from her in such a fury, she was an infamous character." "That nasty poison girl," said Mrs. Silke, "I never will speak to again; she has behaved so abominably ill to me: the last ball we met at, Lady Oxburgh was with them; and I got to the top of the table at supper, as a Baronet's daughter ought to do: but Lady Haresfield, very officiously, desired room might be left for Lady Oxburgh at the head of the table, and I moved down to make room for her; and that nasty poison Miss Canning, rushed past me, as if the room had been on fire, and sat down above me. Miss Canning must know she has no

right to sit above me, and I never will speak to her again." "The more fool you," said the Dr., "Miss Canning has twice your sense, and has had an excellent education: she will always be esteemed by people of refinement: besides I do not see such ill manners in her sitting above you: Lady Oxburgh was a stranger, and wished for one of her party to sit near her, and Miss Canning is more intimate and esteemed by Lady Haresfield, than yourself: had you possessed accommodating manners, you would have made room for her. I see great people at my relation's, Lord Welford, and I see refined manners there, Sal; great people do not tumble like pigs over one another, to see which can get first."

Molly Frost felt her virtue alarmed when she saw Sal Silke bounce off in such a hurry from Miss Canning, and followed her; "Who is that nasty odious creature, Mrs. Silke?" said she; "she looks like some

kept mistress. I dare say she is in high keeping." "High, bum fidget!" said Dr. Stukeley, "because she possesses attractions you do not; you think she must be good for nothing. I tell you what, Molly, learn more candour, do not fancy every woman with a handsomer face than your own is worthless: the men will not like you the less, if you put less vinegar and verjuice in your conversation."

"The men are all so fond of me," said Mrs. Mary. "I have lost my parasol, I dare say some of the men have stolen it. I have to buy five or six every year, for the men finger your parasols so much, and spoil them so." "Why your men admirers then are butchers, I suppose," said the Doctor, "as their fingers are so greasy. Sit down, Molly, and let me hear about your admirers; you shall drink tea at my table to-day, for Sally dare not venture to the other end of the room for fear Miss Canning should sit

above her. I know, Molly, you fancy Mr. Polebrooke admires you,—when did you see him last?" "At the visitation," she drawled out, "I thought he would have jumped over all the benches to get at me, when he saw me, and he would hand me past all the clergy to sit by the altar. I was quite confused to be so distinguished." "Aye, Molly," replied the Doctor, "you began to hope he would lead you to the altar; but his affections are engaged to a widow. You had some hopes once, Molly, of Mr. Whitwell." "He was so fond of talking to me," said Mrs. Mary, "every body supposed I was to be the second Mrs. Whitwell:" "No, they did not," said the Doctor, "every body saw he loved eighteen, but he had discretion to conquer love, when he saw the girl preferred his youngest son. You had great hopes once Molly of catching the rich widower, when you elbowed yourself into going to Harrogate

with his daughters :" "you thought it was a done thing." "I am sure," said Mrs. Mary, "his butler said he never saw his master laugh so much, or be half so happy as with me." "Widowers are hard to catch, Molly," pursued the Doctor, "as Mrs. Lydia can tell you to her sorrow: and then you thought when you went over there in the dead of the night, to give notice of the intended elopement; gratitude must make the gentleman marry you. I wonder the actor did not serve you as the ostler did." "Let me tell you, Mrs. Mary, for one who professes such a mortal dread of the male sex, it was a bold step to take. I should not like a woman who would venture, alone, at midnight, into a shrubbery to meet an actor. Suppose he had acted Bombastes Furioso. The ladies of your county are not very timorous; there is another curious love affair come out there. Have you heard, Mrs. Mary, of Miss Hare, going after

Lord Dornack? She was worse than your Miss; Lord Dornack had been some time in the country, and Miss Hare, who is about sixteen, tumbled over head and ears in love with him. He was about returning to Scotland, and went to the nearest sea-port to go from thence by sea to Scotland. Miss Hare put up a few clothes in a bundle, walked out, and met the stage coach; there was no place in the inside, so up she clambers on the outside, and this candidate for the wife of a peer comes riding into the town on the outside of a stage coach. Miss goes to the inn to hunt out Lord Dornack, and when she found him, told him she was ready to be his wife: but his lordship was not equally ready for matrimony, and declined the honour: and to wipe his hands of her, ordered a chaise, and took her back instantaneously to avoid the hazard of being required to make an honest woman of her. Her father and mother are now going with

her from one watering-place to another, singing, "Who'll buy my wares, who'll buy, who'll buy:" they can make it worth a poor man's while to marry her, and they ought to bleed freely; the sooner they get her off the better: she is goods that will not keep.

"Poor thing," said Mrs. Mary, with affected sympathy, "I pity all women that the men do not like: it is a horrible feeling to be contemned by the male sex." "Come, Molly," said Doctor Stukeley, "do not be so prolix in your own praises: when you begin praising yourself, you are prosing as your father in the pulpit. Do you remember his long sermons?—he used to send every body to sleep." "How can you say so?" said Mrs. Mary, "every body in the neighbourhood used to ask him to write their sermons; he was the best sermon writer in the county." "But they did not ask him to preach the sermons when he had written them," said Doctor Stuke-

ley. Dr. Frost was quite dreaded in the pulpit, and he made himself contemptible by associating with his patron's mistress, and her companions: such conduct is contemptible in any one, and particularly in a clergyman; but a Frost will do any thing to be admitted into a nobleman's house. Your brother Jack will kiss a nobleman's toe, if he will allow him to dine at his table.

Mrs. Silke thought it time for her to hold forth, and seeing Mr. Holland come into the room, "There's that drunken fellow, old Holland," said she. "Now, Sally," said the Doctor, "it is very impolitic in you to declaim against drunkenness: you should not forget your father was a brewer, and for a brewer's daughter to want people to abstain from inebriety, is only to break the brewery; and as yours failed, I suppose drinking was out of fashion at that period. You should remember the retort of the

brewer's coachman, who was turned away for drunkenness:

> 'Tis *soakers* like me, whom you load with reproaches,
> That enables you brewers to ride in your coaches.

The brewery was always a tender subject with Sally, and as she knew the Doctor did not care what he said to her, she dared not provoke him; so held her peace. Mrs. Lydia Crabtree now joined the Doctor's tea table, who said, upon seeing her, "Lydia, I congratulate you; a widower is arrived with some children; you must lose no time in setting your cap at him: go and slobber the children, and go to Wirksworth to-morrow, to buy them some presents.

An elderly gentleman and lady now entered the room, followed by Mr. Hatton; the latter came and seated himself at the Doctor's tea table, between Mrs. Lydia and Mrs. Mary, saying, "Now, Ladies, I

am in that superlatively happy situation, I may sing—

> "How happy could I be with either,
> "Were t'other dear charmer away."

"See your attractions, Mrs. Mary," said the Doctor, "the men cannot keep away from you: but, Hatton, you must have a truce to your gallantry, if it is possible, when seated between two such angels, and tell Monsieur Diable Boiteux who are those you followed into the room?" "That I will do with pleasure," he said; "the history of them and their family, is curious. The gentleman is of the highest rank of beings, at least, what my friend Mrs. Frost reckons such. He is an attorney, who has lived, and does live, at such a rate, he has several times broke, and paid a few shillings in the pound; he has two daughters, to whom, as he could give nothing, he just educated to catch the eye, and make up to

all the men they saw: after various ineffectual attempts, they drew in, at last, a young officer, son of a man of fortune, to engage himself to the eldest girl; the gentleman's father would not hear of the match; but they supposed, when it was an irrevocable deed, he would be reconciled, and they got married; the father died, and left his fortune to the other children; this so affected the disinherited son, it brought on a violent paralytic attack, which reduced him to a state of childhood, and in that wretched state he was a torment some years to his wife and her mother: when he left his wife a widow, she married again, but did not own her marriage, till it was necessary. The other daughter, at eighteen, married an old gouty man between fifty and sixty.

The attorney's brother made a great noise in the world once. He was chaplain to a charity in London, and turned out of it for seducing two young women belong-

ing to it; and the bishop of his diocese threatened to deprive him of his living: it was supposed he would have no resource left, but to go as a *Missionary* to *Otaheite*: but his second wife being alive, and of good family, their intercession softened the bishop, and he retired to his living: a jolly knight, who had married his cook-maid, got acquainted with him at this juncture; my lady thought him a mighty agreeable beau for her, and his wife dying soon after, he became her knight-errant; and travelling in that capacity, he became acquainted with a rich widow, disposed to forget her first husband; he became her second husband, she his third wife, and a fine snug harbour he is now laid up in. The finale of the whole is the sister's marriage; she fixed her affections on a private in the Blues; she wrote a tender confession of her love, and appointed him to meet her for a walk; she gave him money to buy plain clothes, and

they walked, and talked, till she had a mind to be married. She gave him money to go to London, and thither she flew on the wings of love, and got married: the family, when they found her choice, thought it best to get him out of the army, and have established him in the clothing business; but he lost his good looks with his uniform: in plain clothes he is quite a loutish fellow.

"Well done, Asmodeus!" said the Doctor, "I like to set you upon biography, you are so accurate and minute: your memory is wonderfully retentive. I have not done with you yet; there is a very vulgar spoken man at the other end of the room, and he seems very fond of scandal; I should like to know his history: a lady was saying to her neighbour what an alarm there had been at Mr. Gardiner's a few days ago: it was his custom to take a country walk in the evening, and a few evenings since he did not return at his usual hour: his brother

and the servants sat up for him, but he neither returned, nor was he heard of all night: in the morning a countryman called to say he was at their cottage; finding himself unwell, he came in there, and grew worse, and was taken speechless: they did not know him, and could not inform his friends, and he did not sufficiently recover before morning to tell them where to send. "Oh, ma'am!" says this vulgar man, "they knew him as well as I knew my daughters: it was an infamous brothel he was in. He went there every evening; it was only a hum his going a country walk; he would not let any medical man be sent for, or have his own house sent to, for he thought he should get better, and could get home, and nothing be known: but it was a paralytic stroke, and he was obliged to let it be known where he was. He wants that story you tell to get about, but I shall take care it shall be known where he was."

"That man," said Mr. Hatton, "is always busy finding out his neighbour's faults and proclaiming them, and never looks at home. I beg pardon, Ladies, bowing to the tabbies, who looked very much confused, I do not mean you to put on the cap: you know the present company are always excepted. Mr. Fanshawe is the son of a shoemaker, who managed in an election to engage a nobleman's brother to get his son out to India. Mr. Fanshawe returned in a few years a gay young bachelor nabob, vulgar enough: but he captivated the heart of Kitty Nelson, and was supposed a good husband and father; and his vulgarity was tolerated: not that he was candid to that fault in others; for, as a specimen, he said of a lady, he did not like her, she have such a srill voice, and is so wulgar. As a specimen of his own vulgarity, I will instance his walking with some ladies, and a *pot de chambre* was emptied out of window, in

full view; and he began exclaiming against it; a gentleman who just joined the party, inquired the cause of his anger, "Why," he replied, "they have thrown a chamber-pot out of the window." The inquirer could hardly restrain a smile, and a prim lady said, "it is the rudest thing that can be done." Fanshawe's wife died in childbed, leaving him six children; since her death, the family have been always going down in the world; the eldest daughter, after a variety of love adventures, ran off, or rather rode off with an officer: the second made a good sort of humdrum match; the third was the darling bosom friend of the wife of a dignitary in the church; and it was carried such extraordinary lengths, she had an anonymous letter sent her, accusing her of the attachment being criminal. "No! I'm sure it was not;" said Sal Silke, "for she gave monstrous good dinners." "Aye, aye," says Dr. Stukeley, "Sally has a good nose

at a dinner; she never believes any harm where she gets bed and board gratis. Had Hill given her a dinner, she would not have hid in the little closet to detect him.

"Well," pursued Mr. Hatton, "to continue my story, this preciosa forged a draft: it got about that a lady had been attempting a forgery. Mr. Fanshawe, and his father-in-law, who are the two great newsmongers of the place, were all anxiety to find out who it was to expose her: there should be no delicacy used in such a case; she ought to be exposed; it was so puritanical of the bankers not to tell her name. It is an awful warning, Ladies, not to be over eager to expose others; our wickedness may fall on our own pate; and, in truth, people should be very careful that have this propensity, to examine if there is nought to bring out against themselves: if they are so merciless to others, how can they hope for mercy? At last the affair could be hushed

no longer, and he had the satisfaction of finding out who the lady was: she was his own daughter: she was allowed to fly her country, and an exile she must live; the father has not since been so eager to defame others: the still small voice of conscience seems to whisper to him, "Thou art the man."

"Then," said Dr. Stukeley, "he is not like my friend Mrs. Silke, and her companions, a defamatory Quixote." "No," said Mr. Hatton, "he is taught, by dear-bought experience, to respect the feelings of others. After Fanshawe's wife died, it then came out how he had acquired his fortune in India: a nabob came to live near him, and let out that he married the widow of a brick-maker, a woman of colour: he got all her money, and left India: whether she was dead when he came away, or, if dead, had come fairly by her death, this deponent saith not; but not a word of his first wife ever

slipped out from him. I always think," pursued Mr. Hatton, "that those have the most exceptionable characters who are most eager to defame others." "Do not blush, Ladies," said Dr. Stukeley, "I assure you Mr. Hatton meant no reflection upon you. Diable, you must go on: we have many new faces: there is a plump mother and two daughters: if I have any skill in physiognomy, she is come here to say 'Who'll buy my wares?' I overheard a curious conversation between her and Hill. I dare say she has found out Hill has a good fortune: she seems a great fool: she began with saying "she took her daughters about to improve their minds;" she liked to give them new ideas: as they came through Staffordshire, she took them to a *pot-house:* you know Hill's cool manner, 'My dear madam,' said he, with provoking dryness, 'do you mean you took your daughters to an alehouse to give them new ideas, or was it

Wedgewood's pottery you went to?' 'You are jocular, Mr. Hill,' said the lady, 'you cannot suppose people of our consequence could go to an alehouse.' 'As you said you were anxious to give your daughters new ideas, the young ladies might learn them in an alehouse.' 'Hill,' continues this lady, 'I wonder you do not marry: a man of your great fortune should marry: you'll wait till you are old and good for nothing, and then you will marry your housekeeper: you should write to some lady: Heythorp wrote to my daughter; he wrote to her in March, and they married in May.' Hill heard this harangue with his accustomed nonchalance, standing with his arms wrapped round him, and said with the most provoking archness, 'What did they do all April?' This raised such a burst of laughter, it put an end to the lady's harangue."

"There is some anecdote about that lady," said Mr. Hatton, "she is the widow

Beddington: she was married at Gretna Green, but the bride's night-cap I cannot give you any description of." "If you could get the pattern of it," said Dr. Stukeley, "it would be a great obligation to Mrs. Lydia: she collects patterns of wedding night-caps wherever she can get them." "That girl, that is painted so much," continued Mr. Hatton, "the mother calls her sweet sensibility: when she was twelve years old, some officers used to visit very much at the house; and this girl fell in love with one who had been staying some days at the house: when he went away, she requested her mother, as a favour, to be allowed to sleep some nights in his bed, as he left it; neither sheets were to be changed, or the bed made: her mother was fond of telling this story, and said it shewed such sweet sensibility: the other daughter was called the little devil: when she was ten years old, walking out with her maid, she

met a clergyman and his wife in a gig; the lady was in mourning, and the horse was black; so, this girl says to Mr. Howard, 'Why, you are black, and your wife is black, and your horse is black; you are all as black as the devil:' in maturer age these girls have acquired the appellation of the naked beauties, being famous for their nudity.

Mr. Hatton asked Mrs. Frost if she was acquainted with Miss Worrell, of Blackheath? "I see her," said she, "at the Lewisham assemblies." "Don't you think her very pretty and pleasing?" said he. "No;" said Mrs. Frost; "she is a queer dowdy; the men don't like her at all. Sir George Cooke came up to me one ball, and asked me to dance with him; I said I had not determined if I should dance; and I was indifferent about it; there was several girls in want of partners. Now, do, says I, ask Miss Worrell, it will be such

charity. But, indeed, I shall not, said he; I never dance with any but handsome, accomplished women; I am excessively nice about my partners: I will dance with you; but there is not another woman in the room I will dance with. I really pitied the poor girl so much, I asked several men to dance with her; but not one would take compassion upon her." "Remember Molly," said Dr. Stukeley, "you dance with me to-night: I always dance with the handsomest women in the room; and when I have knocked you up, I shall sport the light fantastic toe with Mrs. Silke; my partners must be *handsome*, or the *best dancers* in the room. Have you seen in the newspaper," said he to Mrs. Silke, "that drunken dog, Sir John Dingley, has overturned himself in his curricle, and broke his neck? I really rejoice for his sisters,

poor girls! they have been sacrificed to their worthless brothers, and now they will have a comfortable fortune." "Indeed!" said Mrs. Silke, in a huff, "I cannot think so lightly of the death of a Baronet; he was an old neighbour of ours, and I regret his loss very much." "What, Sally," says the doctor, "I suppose you hoped he would marry your niece, and she would be my lady: you would think it a fine thing to be my lady, and have a drunken dog for a husband." "I cannot sit," said Sal, rising in a fury, "to hear a Baronet spoken so disrespectfully of, whether drunk or sober; a Baronet should always be respected." "Aye, Sally," says the doctor, "now the brewer's daughter prevails, you think drunkenness praiseworthy; it brings grist to the mill."

Mrs. Silke went out of the room in a rage, and the other two tabbies rose,

and followed her. "I do love," said Dr. Stukeley, "to put Sal in a passion; I will set her some day declaiming against the Bible Society; she is quite horn mad on that subject."

CHAPTER II.

I HAVE always remarked, that women in all countries are civil, obliging, tender, and humane; and that they do not hesitate, like man, to perform a generous action.

Just before Sir Robert de Grey and his party set off for Chatsworth, Isabella had received a letter from her father; in which he mentioned the embarrassed situation of Mortimer de Montalt's affairs; his wife had always been extravagant, and their mode of life was beyond their income. This summer she was very much discontented with the want of gaiety in Northumberland; she had not sufficient amusement, or opportunities of wearing her best clothes; and at last she prevailed upon Mortimer to go to

Cheltenham. When there, she would make a dash: her barouche and four was the most shewy in the place; she was the best dresser, and the milliners came to her to set the fashions; at a jeweller's she saw the most bewitching diamond necklace; but it cost fifteen thousand pounds: it was out of the question; but her anxiety for it was unconquerable; and the jeweller to help her out of her dilemma, said he could make one to imitate it, quite as handsome, and it would not cost so many hundreds; but still it cost more than Mrs. de Montalt could command; and she dare not apply to her husband, for he already censured her extravagance. But Mr. Harmer, in his anxiety to smooth her difficulties, promised to be satisfied with payment by instalments, and it was settled to suit Mrs. de Montalt's pin money: the necklace was made, and sent home; and great was the exultation with which Mrs. de Montalt exhibited her

person in the necklace ; and great was the envy it excited: many were the juries of ladies empannelled to decide, if Mrs. Mortimer de Montalt could afford to dress as she did. All this shew and parade, drew the eyes of gamblers upon Mortimer, and one unlucky day, he yielded to their importunities to play, and did not escape from their hands, till he had lost fifteen thousand pounds. This money must be paid directly, and Mortimer wrote to his father.

Sir Roger de Montalt had always disliked the match, and now was so enraged with his son and his wife, he refused to assist them; and they remained at Cheltenham, with these evils surrounding them. Miss Neville had an independent fortune of twenty thousand pounds she inherited from her mother. Upon hearing the account of Mortimer's difficulties, she did not hesitate one moment; she determined what she could command should go to Mortimer de

Montalt; but she did not wish it to go in her name; Lord Cardross she fixed upon for her agent; to him she told the circumstances, and requested him, in his own name, to transfer the sum to Mortimer. Lord Cardross had an ample fortune, and a liberal mind. "Miss Neville," he said, "I admire your generosity; I have heard of such instances when the gentleman can repay generosity by marrying the lady: Mortimer is lost to you, and in such a way, that some women would triumph in his distress; but your noble soul will give up a handsome independence to a man who has wrung your heart with the keenest agonies of love, and deserted you for a woman every way your inferior. He shall be freed from his troubles; but do not cramp your noble spirit, by giving up all your independent fortune. I will be the ostensible person in the matter, and let me be the sharer; you give ten thousand pounds, and I will give ten."

Isabella would have the deed all her own; she thanked Lord Cardross, but allowed him no share in the matter, but the name; she had written to her father, to inform him of her intentions, and the business was immediately settled; the money was sent off to Mortimer, and he and his wife returned into Northumberland with all speed.

Lord Cardross having spoken to Isabella of her disappointment, reverted to his own; he said, he had no doubt, Lord de Courcy would carry off the pride, and the boast of Northumberland; but it gave him pleasure to see he was a man every way deserving her; they would be a happy couple, and a blessing to their neighbourhood: the aim of his life was to bear to think of her as the wife of another. "Though I look upon her as lost to me for ever," said he, "I hope to preserve her good opinion; I shall always endeavour to deserve it."

They now reached Chatsworth, and as

the party were walking up to the house, Lord Cardross said, "if I was the Duke, I would bring my bride here for the first time, late in the evening, and there should be an illumination; what an effect might be produced, with the arch, and the approach to the house, the quadrangle, and the entrance in a blaze of light! my bride would fancy herself transported to a palace in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments." Lord de Courcy said, "Do bring a bride to Dryburgh Abbey, my Lord, and transport her with your excursive fancies; you can find room for romance there; walk about by moon-light in Melrose Abbey, and whisper the soft breathings of ardent love in her ear." "There was a time," said Lord Cardross, "I could not have stood a joke on that subject; from you, Lord de Courcy, it sounds too much like insult; forbear to break a bruised reed; you touch on the string on which hang all my sorrows."

Lord de Courcy immediately took his hand, "Forgive me, my Lord," he said, "I admire and respect you; to wound you is far from my thought: mine was idle rattle." Jemima de Grey took hold of his arm, as he approached her, and they walked up the grand entrance to the house. When they got to the chapel, Lords de Courcy and Cardross staid behind, and the former said, "I cannot forgive myself for my flippancy in wounding your feelings." Lord Cardross replied, "You must consider me as one who has been on the brink of the grave, who is now recovering; but still, weak as a child, and cannot stand the rude blast. You probed my feelings to the quick, in speaking of moon-light walks in Melrose Abbey, breathing ardent love in the ear of my bride. Heaven alone knows what my heart has suffered in my solitary wanderings there; and how near my brain has been overturned. To image the object of my fondest idolatry in that most beautiful scene, listening to my

ardent vows of unalterable love: you know not the objects you awaken, which I endeavour to expel: I am labouring to subdue myself, but kindness and soothing is essential to me; that sweet soul understands me; she took hold of my arm; the slightest attention from her soothes my troubled soul. I will visit you at Prudhoe Castle, when my heart's best treasure is mistress there; she will never triumph over, or insult me; and I expect equal forbearance from you, my lord." Lord de Courcy felt so much for such acute sufferings, he almost wished Jemima to turn her attentions to him, to soothe his mind; she was aware of his state, and sometimes turned and talked to him. When they got into the suite of rooms, once inhabited by Mary Queen of Scots, Lord Cardross asked her to sing Queen Mary's lamentation; she sat down and sung the song in a sweetly plaintive, simple style; it seemed to sink into his heart, and compose him. He

would have felt more for Mary, had he not felt so much for himself, at that time. After leaving the house the grounds were surveyed, and then the party adjourned to the inn to dine, and in the afternoon reached Castleton. It was some difficulty to find beds for so many, and they could not be called celestial beds, neither could they be called beds of justice, for they did not do justice to sleep, but rather frightened repose by their inflexibility; but our travellers did not murmur loudly at their miseries, but put up with the evils of a bad inn, with tolerable fortitude.

It was agreed they should explore the cavern the next morning before breakfast, and Charon had notice to be in readiness. At eight o'clock they set out from the inn, and a great posse of children and idle people followed them to the mouth of the cavern. Sir Robert de Grey took charge of Jemima crossing the Styx, and Isabella

came with Lord Cardross: Lord de Courcy when he landed, said, "I am come to seek my Eurydice; I must have the care of Miss de Grey here." Sir Robert resigned her to a younger guardian, and Lord Cardross conducting Isabella, they moved on: a choir of children were placed aloft to sing to them; and when they arrived at the place for a blast, the ladies declared their courage equal to standing the report, but the explosion is tremendous: the whole length of the cavern requires a careful conductor, and the two ladies were never left for a moment, by their attentive protectors. Wives have complained, in exploring the cavern, that their husbands have neglected them; and they were obliged to take hold of the arm of Charon, to keep themselves from falling: Isabella seldom sang, but she took it into her head to sing mad Bess, which she sung very well, and the place gave it a singular effect. Talking of Charon, had roused the

idea in her mind, and it was in unison with her feelings. When they returned to the place where the lights are put out, Charon led Jemima to the approach of daylight; and Lord de Courcy followed close: he did not know where they were going, and he felt a jealousy of having his Eurydice torn from him: he thought then, that Charon was transformed into Pluto. The return to daylight is a highly impressive scene; the mouth of the cavern forms a fine feature.

A good breakfast is very comfortable refreshment after the chilling damps of the cavern; and there are few days in the year it will not be more enjoyable by the fire-side. After being well warmed, and rested, the party went to Speedwell mine. There are a hundred and six dirty slippery steps to be descended, down which a guardian is much wanted; and there should always be as many gentlemen as ladies. The travellers descended safe to the bottom, and embarked

in the boat, which goes along a passage six hundred and fifty yards, to a landing-place called the Devil's Hall. This hall of his Satanic majesty, is rather tremendous: it is a boarded floor over a cascade, which roars with turbulent fury, and finds an outlet into the great cavern: the abyss it stands over is said to be bottomless: all the rubbish cut out of the passage for six hundred yards beyond the gulf, has been thrown into this abyss; besides sixteen tons every day for seven years, apparently without any effect. This cavern is two hundred and ninety yards from the surface of the earth, and so straight you may see a lighted candle, like a brilliant star, at seven hundred and fifty yards' distance. When the Devil's Hall is lighted with Bengal lights at the top, it has a grand and singular effect. As Lord Cardross was handing Isabella into the boat, to return, her foot slipped, and her face came with some violence against

the corner of his hat, and her eye was hurt with the sharp edge: such an accident is painful, and his Lordship was full of attention to her; but it was not attended with any serious consequences: the boatman sung with the lungs of a Stentor, "Cease, rude Boreas:" as his song ended, the bottom of the steps was regained, and the party arrived safely again in daylight. As the carriages were there waiting for them, they drove some way up the Buxton road to admire the fine rocks, called the Whinnets: after half an hour's drive, they returned to the inn, and soon after bade adieu to Castleton, which is in itself a miserable place, and returned back through Middleton Dale, which some call a rival beauty to Dovedale: it has very fine rocks, and some fine foliage, and is well worth seeing. After stopping to dine at Bakewell, the travellers resumed their carriages to return to Matlock. One of the finest skies ever seen ornamented and

illuminated the landscape: a gorgeous glowing red was spread over the heavens, and the last four miles of the drive to Matlock is very fine country; and with the heavens displaying their glory over such splendid scenery, it was beyond imagination fine. All again looked with pleasure on the high Tor, and heard the water murmuring at its feet, as the welcome sound of an old friend; the carriages drove up to the old Bath, and the ladies began to think, and plan, how to rival her who was unrivalled: but such labour in vain is never thought of, or acknowledged, by the female sex: Queen Bess, with all her sense, was not exempt from that petitesse of character, but was ambitious to rival Queen Mary as a beauty.

The Tabbies had not seen this party, and were anxious to know if Miss de Grey really was so very handsome: there was a cruel stroke to Mrs. Silke attending her, for Sir Robert de Grey was an older Baronet than

Sir John Silke; so poor Sal Silke was obliged to give place to Jemima. Mrs. Mary Frost would not allow that Miss de Grey was comparable to herself as a beauty, and she was confident Lord de Courcy would make up to her in preference; and Mrs. Lydia Crabtree was certain Lord Cardross would think she must make a monstrous good wife, and she should be mistress of Dryburgh Abbey, and set his money flying, which way she pleased; and she should keep such a table as the Duke of Roxburgh did. "Alack-a-day how we apples swim," said Mr. Hatton, as he overheard this conversation.

Mrs. Mary Frost was determined to shine at dinner: she wished to appear full of feeling and sensibility, and said, "she had been crying her eyes out of her head all the morning with reading Sir Charles Grandison; the woes of the inimitable Clementina were so affecting." Sir Robert de Grey said, "he

did not admire the character of Clementina, or the conduct of her family. To what purpose are human beings endowed with reason, if their passions are to subdue their reason; she had nothing to encourage her love; Sir Charles had shewn no attachment to her; belonging to different religions, different countries, there was every reason against her giving way to her attachment for him: she pretended to say it was love for his soul; she only wanted to make a convert of him: did she try to convert her friend Mrs. Beaumont? If a soul was all she loved, why was not Mrs. Beaumont's dear to her, as Sir Charles Grandison's? I am like her confessor, I see no delicacy in her love; and where was her delicacy to be still making Sir Charles her only object, when he was married? Her coming over to England was sufficient to destroy the character of any woman; and it was Sir Charles's delicacy, not hers,

spared his wife being made unhappy: and I praise not her delicacy in so often reminding Lady Grandison she might have married Sir Charles: Lady Grandison spared her the retort, it was owing to the intercession of her family he yielded to accept her. And where was the wisdom of her parents setting a handsome young man, of rank and fortune, to teach her English; and contriving all sorts of schemes to leave them alone, and entreating him to gain her confidence why she was unhappy? Had she been a girl without fortune, they would have been supposed to be trying all sorts of tricks to entrap him to marry her: I think it fortunate she came chaste from the hands of Sir Charles." "Yes, indeed," said Mrs. Silke, "if she had been with child, and they had prosecuted for damages, and I had been upon the jury, I would not have awarded her any damages." "To be sure," said Mrs. Mary, "men are nasty fellows,

I never dare trust myself alone with them, for fear of being teased into a promise of marriage: I wonder Clementina was not afraid of trusting herself alone with Sir Charles." "I more wonder," said Sir Robert, "that Sir Charles was not afraid of trusting himself alone with Clementina; I think his virtue was most in danger: Clementina should have been taken the tour of Italy, and if that did not cure her love, she should have been crossed over to Sicily; there is much to excite attention in the fine city of Palermo; and a pilgrimage to St. Rosolia would have afforded her some good exercise; and if that did not cure her love, she should have extended her travels to Mount Etna, and ascended to the highest pinnacle of that; the traversing knee deep in snow and ice, would have been very salutary to her. I think she would have descended from Etna cured of her love: or if that did not suffice, she should have crossed the Mediterranean, and landed in Spain,

traversed from the south to the north of Spain, crossed the Pyrenees, and gone through the south of France to Italy, and by the time she regained their Palace in Bologna, I trust her love would have been cured.

"Poor thing!" said Mrs. Mary, "I always feel so much sympathy for women who cannot get men to love them; I have been so teased with lovers, but I never could love any man; I never saw a man I could love, nor did I ever hear of one formed to suit my delicate sensibility but Pope; my heart could have formed alliance with him, had he lived, during the brilliant blaze of my beauty. But people always say, love is invincible; I know nothing about it."

"I do," said Lord Cardross, "a man may love to excess the most exalted of human beings, and the fairest of Heaven's works, his body may be subdued, and his mind racked to the keenest anguish; but he can, and he ought to subdue his love, if it

is hopeless: the effort requires strength of body and mind, but it is an exertion our *duty* calls upon us to perform, and it is our *interest*; the mind that is subdued and under control, will yield more satisfaction than the glorious perverseness, as it was called, of Clementina. I know an Englishwoman who gave up the man of her heart, and reconciled his friends to his marrying as he wished: her body for a time gave way, but her mind never; she has relinquished a large fortune to make them happy. How does Clementina sink, set in competition with such a character! Such I praise, not a brain-sick Clementina: I never heard any but old maids praise her; and I always suspected they were not chaste. One told me I had never been in love, to suppose reason could subdue love; and another told me love had nothing to do with reason: what could I think of them?"

"It is very extraordinary," said Mrs.

Silke, "men have no feeling for women who cannot get married; I am sure it is a very hard case upon them." "That it is, indeed," said Mrs. Lydia Crabtree; "there was Olivia came over to England on purpose after Sir Charles Grandison, and he would not marry her; she would even have been his mistress, and he would not take her. Men are strange brutes; the more pains women take to get them, the less chance they have of being married." Sir Robert de Grey said, "he thought Miss Byron a much superior character to Clementina; she had reason to suppose Sir Charles liked her; his family and her own were anxious for the match: yet when she thought him lost to her, she was not raving or sullen; she suppressed her own feelings, she wished Sir Charles not to perceive her attachment to him. When she supposed him married to Clementina, she raved not; she came into society, she wished no one

to perceive she was unhappy; no duty was neglected; she would have appeared a superior character, had another told of her lovers and complimenters; the putting her praises in her own mouth, made her appear conceited and affected; but there is nothing to disgust in her; she is a woman of propriety of manners, who neither courts the married or single: I wish the same could be said of all heroines; some girls think they are very amiable in only courting married men, and justify themselves by saying, you cannot say I am trying for a husband. If women must pay court to men, I think it is more innocent to make up to the single; but I think it still more meritorious to wait for men to make up to them. The fruit that will fall without shaking, is too mellow for use, most men say."

"But," said Mrs. Lydia Crabtree, "how are men to know a lady is ready to have them, if they do not tell them so: I think

I do not do myself justice, if I do not give men an opportunity to make me an offer."

"And how does it answer, Lydia," said Dr. Stukeley; "did your going down to take possession of Mr. Seewell's house, and giving him an opportunity from morning to night, for some months, answer the purpose? And did Major Miller ever avail himself of the opportunities you gave him? And trust me, it will be the same with Harry Monk: you will never get him to renounce celibacy in your favour. You homely ladies are fond of fancying you do not get offers of marriage, because men cannot find opportunities; and that is the *only* reason you become old maids. Men can always find opportunities to make offers of marriage, where they have a mind. I can tell you of a lady who finessed nicely to give an opportunity of making her an offer; but the only question the gentleman asked her in the *tête-à-tête* was, if she pre-

fered *cherry pie* or *custard*? So your opportunities will end in being asked, if you prefer cherry-pie or custard."

"A woman loses her first charm," said Lord Cardross, "that departs from the retired delicacy of her sex. A delicate woman should never forget, there is a disgusting class in her sex, and the more she is unlike them in conduct, the more she will be esteemed by the sensible part of the male sex. How early are men exposed to the disgusting freedoms of the wanton: how much more contemptible and reprehensible is such conduct in the higher classes, whose superior education should implant superior principle. A woman that will overstep the bounds of delicacy for a husband, may, when a wife, take the same steps for a gallant. A woman who is forward before marriage, is rarely a chaste wife. How melancholy are our examples of adultresses; how is our social life destroyed by such

wantons; their husbands and children deserted and forgotten, and themselves become outcasts of society, that might have been the ornament of the highest ranks.

Mrs. Mary Frost thought it would be a fine thing for her, if she could get Sir Robert de Grey to marry her. She thought with herself, to marry a man of his fortune, to be mistress of Hulne Abbey, mother-in-law to such a superior character as Miss de Grey; and then Sir Robert is a perfect gentleman, and then there's my brother the attorney can get the plundering of the estate. I will suggest to him what an advantage a sensible prudent mother would be to Miss de Grey, surrounded as she is by lovers. So Mrs. Mary opened her batteries upon Sir Robert by drawling out with her harsh voice, she was surprised he did not marry again; an amiable, affectionate mother would be such an advantage to his daughter, so young as she was, and so

much in the way of men, and then he could not hope to keep her as his companion, and how solitary and wretched he would find himself, shut up alone in that vast house, such as she had heard Hulne Abbey described to be: an agreeable, sensible woman, full of conversation, whose society would be courted by all the neighbourhood, and who could read to him, and hold learned disputations with him, would be such an invaluable blessing. The gentlemen could hardly suppress a laugh at this oration, and Sir Robert, perfect gentleman as he was, could hardly forbear being ruffled with such a cat, supposing she could draw him in to marry her; and replied with some degree of asperity; "Madam, my daughter wants no she-dragon to guard her, she is not a Clementina; nor do I want a grimalkin to caterwaul in my house." This unceremonious reception of Mrs. Mary's proffered love quite overset the gentlemen's gravity, and

there was such a laugh. Mrs. Mary felt a little ruffled. Dr. Stukeley, who was sitting next her jogged her elbow, and whispered loud enough for all to hear, " Never be disheartened, Molly, put a good face on the matter, and say you refused Sir Robert, that you thought he looked like a libertine, and you have such an awful dread of marriage: that he offered to disinherit his daughter, and settle all his fortune on you and the children he should have by you; and Miss de Grey might starve, for any thing he cared; so as he could but gain you for a wife." This whisper, overheard by all, continued the laugh, at Mrs. Mary's expense, and so disconcerted her, she arose and bounced out of the room, and the two other Tabbies followed her. Mr. Hatton called out after her,—

Molly Frost, Molly Frost,
Your labour is lost,
You'll never a lover persuade:

The men will all fly,
And leave you to die,
Oh! terrible chance, an old maid.
You'd rather on earth, have five brats at a birth,
Than in hell be a leader of apes, Mrs. Frost.

Sally Silke, Sally Silke,
You never will bilk,
E'er a man into a match;
The men will you shun,
And leave you undone,
A leader of apes with old Scratch;
You'd rather on earth, have five brats at a birth,
Than in hell be a leader of apes, Mrs. Silke.

Mrs. Crab, Mrs. Crab,
How fain would you knab,
Some widower into a match;
But the men will not bite,
And you're full of spite,
A leader of apes with old Scratch.
You'd rather on earth, have five brats at a birth,
Than in hell be a leader of apes, Mrs. Crab.

"Bravo! bravo! Mr. Hatton!" all cried out, "you rival Mathews." "How

Molly does try to make a somebody of herself," said Dr. Stukeley: "if lies could have made a woman of rank or fortune, Molly would have been first-rate in both long ago." "I think all the Tabbies are tolerably anxious to get out of the sisterhood," said Sir Robert; "I thought while they were holding forth, of an excellent plan for the accommodation of old maids, which would be an essential advantage to society at large. There is a French work called *Les Mille et un Faveur*, in which the king of a certain country takes such a disgust to the female sex, he thinks they only embitter the happiness of life, and, for the advantage of the nation, he governs, he builds, a large city, in the heart of his dominions, wherein all the women are shut up; it is surrounded by three high walls, and between two of them, wild beasts range; and every pains are taken to prevent the possibility of their escape. What

a blessing to society would such an asylum be for old maids, cut off from all possible communication with any other description of society." "Excellent indeed!" all the gentlemen exclaimed:—"If, Sir Robert, you could accomplish such a plan, you would deserve to have a statue of gold erected to you, as the friend of the human race. What lies,—what slandering,—what backbiting,—what distortions of actions, would be spared! They must tear one another to pieces, having no one else to mangle; that would not signify. You are famed for your philanthropy amongst your neighbours, but accomplish this, and you will be the universal philanthropist: you would outshine Mr. Howard."

The Tabbies had adjourned into Mrs. Mary Frost's room, and the subject of their caterwauling was, the eligibility of Sir Robert de Grey taking a second wife. Mrs. Silke would like weel enough, to be my

lady; and she had been pondering in her own mind, that to be Lady de Grey would be a fine promotion for her. There would be a fine field for domineering in at Hulne Abbey, and she should have her coach and four to travel in instead of a hack-chaise; and Sir Robert seemed to have a taste for travelling; they should suit very well, and then Mrs. Lydia thought it would be a fine thing for her to be Lady de Grey: she should keep an excellent table, and live just like the Duke of Northumberland; no matter if Sir Robert could afford it or not. Mrs. Lydia was no calculator, but always took somebody for her example: she made those, whose purses she could get at, vie with; and she should keep a strict watch over that girl,—she was a great deal too much indulged, and set up as a beauty, and allowed to dress much too expensively; and suffered to go about much more than was proper: she should never suffer her to go

out, and she should not suffer a man to speak to her; and she should insist upon Sir Robert not allowing her more than twenty pounds a year for clothes and pocket money, and she should dictate how the money should be spent; and she should never suffer her to receive a letter, or write a letter, but what she saw. And Lydia was fool enough to suppose Sir Robert was brute enough to give up an amiable girl to Winifred Wormwood and Bell Harlow, united, to torment.

How little did these Tabbies, who were preparing to fasten themselves upon Sir Robert de Grey, imagine the plan he was forming for benefiting society by ridding the kingdom of their envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness, by enclosing the whole sisterhood within unscaleable walls, where they could only prey upon one another. How would their enjoyments be curtailed! No finding out who was with

child, unless they chanced to have any Joanna Southcotts amongst them. No beauties to pull to pieces. No married women to find out their husbands took too many liberties with them.

Before the conference broke up, Mrs. Mary Frost said she must inform them of such an outrage to all decency as had taken place: it absolutely made her hair stand an end with horror. She had just received a letter out of Cambridgeshire which informed her that Miss Peacock was actually married to Mr. Broome, and was gone with him down to his estate in Northumberland, all alone in the carriage, not only without any female friend, but not even a female servant, to make it decent. Nothing but men within-side and without-side the carriage; and, I dare say, she will bring nothing but men children into the world to make it worse. Such an outrage to decency I never heard of before. "Aye,"

says Mrs. Silke, "and nobody can see now what odious liberties that nasty fellow may take with her: we shall never hear what passes. I should like to know, I've quite a burning curiosity to hear about new-married people: a married woman should always take some female friend with her, that will pry into these matters, and tell them again. Now Mrs. Lydia is a very agreeable woman to go with a bride, for she takes care to inform herself of what passes, and tells every body she sees."

"I should like to do something to mortify Miss de Grey," said Mrs. Lydia. "To throw aquafortis amongst her clothes, or——oh! I've a delightful scheme come into my head. I have a worked muslin gown that I tore so monstrously yesterday, it never can be mended; and I saw Miss de Grey's maid making up a new one for her, exactly like it. I will put my torn dress in her drawer, and take her new one

in exchange: put the torn part between two drawers, she will think it is torn in opening the drawer. I hope it will make the girl cry." —"Oh! delightful!" the two Tabbies said; "and," said Mrs. Silke, "cannot we set about a report she is with child, or that she was caught going to run off with the footman." "Aye," said Mrs. Mary, "running off with the footman will do very well; that strapping fellow that stood behind her chair at dinner I looked at very much: he is a handsome well-made man. I had my eyes upon him. I shall hint to Sir Robert the danger of keeping handsome footmen. I do love to pull down and mortify beauties. I should like to see her crying with vexation," said Mrs. Lydia. "What a thing it is a girl of that age should have had so many offers, and be allowed to marry when she pleases. I should like to wash her face over with walnut juice. I wonder Sir Robert does not at least ask me to join the

party to travel with them. A woman of my propriety and judgment would be a great advantage to such a girl. I would make her wear a great bonnet from morning to night; noboby should see her face, and then I could wear her clothes, and spoil them, and give her many a sly pinch. She should not be so indulged, I promise her. What nonsense it is to have three carriages for five people, and they never ask any body to join their parties: and there is Miss Neville, she is not so much admired, but she seems quite a numskull."

When the company were sitting at tea, Sir Robert de Grey's groom came very abruptly into the drawing-room, looking aghast, and going up to his master, said, "Sir, your mare Debby has dropt down dead, as I was riding her." "Then," said Sir Robert, "all I can say is, she shall be buried. She has been a faithful servant to me—she shall not be given to the dogs.—

See that she is decently buried." "Oh! no, Sir!" said the groom, "she is not dead now, she is alive, and in the stable,—but dead she was, and dead she lay, till I had her blooded, and that brought her to life again, so I led her into the stable." "Then," said Sir Robert, "she shall return to Hulne, and spend the rest of her days at her ease in the park. I have a stud of worn-out horses there she shall join. Neither man nor beast that wear out their youth in my service shall ever be neglected by me in age." This being settled, the groom left the room. "I did not expect," said Sir Robert, "from the outset of the story, that my mare was still alive; servants have such odd abrupt ways of communicating disasters."

Mr. Bearchurch, an ill-tempered, morose, rude clergyman, came and seated himself by Miss Neville at tea, and began letting out his ill-humour. "Ar'nt you sick of

this confounded place?" said he. "No!" said Miss Neville, "I never was in a sweeter scene in my life. What can be more beautiful than the opposite view? Oh! there's nothing but rocks and wood. I'm soon sick of them. I do not know what to do with myself." Isabella said, "There was some delightful excursions to go in the neighbourhood. Have you been to Castleton, and seen the great cavern, and Speedwell mine?" "Yes, they're only fit for toads. I very near dashed my brains out in that confounded cavern, it's so low in one part; and I suppose, Miss, you admire Chatsworth." "Yes," said Isabella, "the house is fine, and the grounds also." "Aye," growled out Mr. Bearchurch, "I suppose you like to be wet to the skin. I was flammed into that infernal place, with their Buxton water, and was soused all over in a minute. I expected to catch my death of cold." Isabella said, "Did you see Had-

don Hall?" "Yes, it's only fit for owls and jackdaws. I would not live there if the duke would give it to me." "Have you seen Hardwick Hall?" said Isabella; "can you find no beauties there?" "No! an old dungeon, fit only for a madhouse: if I had been Mary, I should have thought it a deliverance to have my head cut off to get out of such a place." Isabella said, "Have you been to Dovedale?" "Aye, worse and worse; I was near breaking my neck there; and there's nothing to see: why, when you've got up to Reynard's Hall and Kitchen, which you do at the hazard of your neck, they are only fit for toads. I stumbled about, and could not keep on my feet; and you can get nothing to eat there: and then there is an old woman goes by way of guide. She is such an old hag, I thought she would bewitch me. I asked this old devil if she was married?" "No, Sir," she snuffled out through her snuffy nose, "I

never had, not no husband at all." Isabella was determined to try if she could not find something to please this Bruin the bear; so she said, "Mr. Bearchurch, if you have seen Keddleston, you must have been pleased with it." "No, I was not," growled out the bear; "I was glutted with sweets; fine steps, fine pillars, fine rooms, fine pictures; I hate a fine place, there's nothing to find fault with: the people don't put one in a passion, for they are civil."

Isabella now gave it up as a lost case to hope this savage monster could be pleased. She thanked her stars she was not his wife; and said, "The Keddleston water will not glut you with sweets." "No, no! confound it," said he, "it stinks like a cess-poll." "Did you go to Derby, to see the manufactory of china?" said Isabella. "Yes," said Mr. Bearchurch, "I was fool enough to go there, and there again I was glutted with sweets. I do not care how

china is made. There I was dragged to see a man turning a wheel, and shaping the china: then I was stewed into a place to see it baked; then hoisted up to see it painted; then there was a pack of frowzy old women what they call printing the china. Jemima de Grey could not keep her countenance any longer with this cynical bear's miseries, and laughed so heartily, she attracted the attention of Mr. Bearchurch. "Aye, miss," said he, "you are too young to be tired of life; for my part, I hate every thing I see." "I pity the man," said Sir Robert, "who can travel from Dan to Beersheba, and cry 'tis all barren." "There is misery enough in travelling," said Mr. Bearchurch, "for those who hate it like me, to be bumped upon a horse, or stifled in a carriage; pray what pleasure is there in that?" "Oh! you should walk," said Mrs. Silke, who was now rising from her tea-table, to go and exercise herself: "walking is my fa-

vourite motion. It is impossible a person can be tired of their own motion." "Oh! confound your pedestrians," said he, "blister your feet, be scorched in the sun, and drenched in the rain: and how are you to have a change of clothes? You go like a snail with your all on your back." "Borrow of the landlord, to be sure," said Mrs. Silke. "Well, if Boniface is not half my size, how am I to get on his clothes! His coat would make me a waistcoat, and his small clothes reach my knees: you'd make a Highlander of me. I suppose you think nothing of bare knees." "The nasty odious fellow!" said Mrs. Frost, who just then joined Mrs. Silke, "I declare the very thoughts of a Highland dress makes me tremble; I once was at a review of a Highland regiment, and it was a windy day; I did not know what to do with my eyes; I was shocked every way I looked. My sister had a Highland officer dined with

her one day, and she had a chair out of the kitchen brought for him to sit upon; though he declared he had drawers on, she would not trust him to sit on her best chairs." Bruin, the bear, seemed *almost* pleased that he had shocked these two virtuous damsels, who hurried out of the room for fear any thing else should shock their ears, "From that old fat porpoise," as Mrs. Silke called him, "I did not know what else he would say, after he got to such indecency; and I am sure I said nothing to provoke it."

Dr. Stukeley now came up, and asked Bruin if he had escaped the bad fever that had gone about in his neighbourhood? "No;" growled out Mr. Bearchurch. "I had it bad enough; and what was still worse, I was plagued with an infernal old hag of a nurse sitting up with me of nights; there she was clattering tea-cups about, drinking tea, to keep the cold out of her stomach; and when there was peace from that noise, she

was snoring; so I never could get to sleep; and at last, one night, she made such a confounded noise with her snoring, as if all the pigs in the kingdom had broke into my room; this I could endure no longer, so I jumped out of bed, turned the old sorceress out of the room, and told her she might snore with whoever would endure that infernal grunting; that I would defy the devil himself to sleep in the sound of that herd of swine; so I locked the door, and she went and told the servants I was so delarious, I had almost murdered her."

There was a curious *tête-à-tête* drinking tea at a small table, the Widow Clackit and Mr. Shakespeare; the Widow was an incessant talker, so was Mr. Shakespeare; he determined to silence her; so he got her to a snug tea-table, *tête-à-tête*, talked incessantly the whole time, and would not suffer her to get in a word; not that she quietly acquiesced in silence, but whenever

she attempted to speak, he, like Sir David Dunder, said, Be quiet, I know it. In vain did the Widow, with tongue and hands, resist the imposition to silence; she used violent gesticulations; he always raised his voice, and went on at full gallop. What a thraldom for Mrs. Clackit! But get in a word she could not, by any contrivance; she thought his bread and butter must go the wrong way, and make him cough, then she could start forward; but nothing would favour her, both tea and bread and butter went the right way; his words were like a rolling river, that murmuring flowed, and flowed for ever; neither break nor pause was there. So Mrs. Clackit thought as she could not talk, she would walk, and rose to go out when tea was over; but Mr. Shakespeare took hold of her hands, made her sit down, and on he talked, and kept her for two hours, in vain using the most violent gesticulations and efforts to speak;

he went on with unabated fluency, and had all the conversation to himself; and the *tête-à-tête* ended in the complete triumph of Mr. Shakespeare having silenced the Widow Clackit for two whole hours.

Mr. Hatton and Dr. Stukeley were observing this scene with much pleasure, and the former directed the attention of the latter to a lady and her daughter who were sitting at another table; "the elderly lady," said Mr. Hatton, "is quite the reverse of Mrs. Clackit, her husband has celebrated her propriety of speech in these two lines:—

"Ever ruled by reason's laws,
She never speaks without a cause."

"I wish that was the case with my wife," said the Doctor, "she will find fault without any cause." "There is not quite so much panygeric as appears," said Mr. Hatton; "the lady is very fond of the word Because, which she shortens into 'cause; and, whatever she says, 'cause is

always brought in: her husband tried to laugh her out of the perpetual use of the word, ineffectually; so he wrote these two lines to ridicule, not to praise her. She reminds me of the fable of the Crab, and her daughter; she is always setting up herself as a pattern to her daughter. I was highly amused this morning with a lecture on walking, Mrs. Ladle was giving her daughter Sophia, she has such bad corns she can hardly walk; and she pulls her gown tight over her bottom when she walks, and with this elegant style said, "Now, Sophy, can't you walk as I do, 'cause ye see, I am such an excellent walker." I could hardly help saying, You had better walk in any other style, Miss. Observe her now with Miss Ladle, "now Sophy, can't you hold your bread and butter as I do; 'cause ye see you hold it so clumsily. Now, Sophy, this sugar is not so good as Mr. Rump's;" and Mrs. Ladle

turning to Mrs. Waller, asked "if she bought her grocery of Mr. Rump?" "No, ma'am," said Mrs. Waller, "Back is my man; I do not like Rump, none of his things are good." "Rump is my man," said Mrs. Ladle; 'cause ye see he has the best grocery." "Indeed! I do not see it;" said Mrs. Waller, "for I always deal with Back, in preference." "'Cause ye see," said Mrs. Ladle, "I have dealt with Rump some years, I must be a judge." This bandying about of Back and Rump, and their grocery, amused the company very much; they hardly thought it credible there could be two such names living opposite each other, both with large shops, and in the town where they lived; it was customary to hear these disputes of the merits of Back versus Rump.

Mrs. Ladle went on, "now, Sophy, we must settle about your dress, 'cause ye see you are not much of a town girl, and do

not know much about dress." So it was settled, Sophy, by way of being very smart, was to have one of her mother's old gowns, (a dyed damask with large flowers) made up for her. "It is a heavy misfortune," said Mr. Hatton, "for a family to have such a mother; she can neither educate or bring them out in the world; her husband married her for money, and lives as much away from her as he can."

Sir Robert de Grey and his party, determined to visit Hardwick Hall before they left Matlock; as the roads are so bad to it, they settled to go on horse-back, and set out the following morning. As they rode on, they talked over the company at Matlock, and the Tabbies, of course, came upon the tapis. Sir Robert said, "that old cat Molly Frost, with her sharp nose and rheumy eye-lids, put me quite out of humour, with offering herself to me. What should I plague myself and my household,

my tenantry, and my neighbours, with such a grimalkin for? She has not one recommendation; she would invent all sorts of malignant lies to defame my daughter, and there are two evils of marrying a person without fortune, you have them to maintain and all their relations; I should be devoured by the attorney, and his famished horde of children, worse than by an army of locusts." Lord de Courcy said, "You are in the most imminent danger, Sir Robert, for I am sure, all the Tabbies have an eye upon you. What objections can you make to the lovely and accomplished Mrs. Silke?" "There would be some economy in that," said Sir Robert, "I could turn off both my gardener and dairy-maid, Sally is equal to the work of both; but then she has such an enormous appetite, she eats as much as both gardener and dairy-maid, and I should not feel secure, she would not beat me; and I am certain I could not combat success-

fully against her; Sally will never gain any man's love." "What do you say to Mrs. Lydia Crabtree," said Lord de Courcy. "Crabs, vinegar, and verjuice," said Sir Robert, "I would not even take her for my dairy-maid; I am sure she would turn all the cream sour; I can physiognomize in her Winifred Wormwood, Bell Harlow, Goneril, Regan, and every tormenting fury that ever was born. What would be the lot of my darling and pride of my life, with such a mother-in-law set over her, she would rival Brownrigg in her brutality: you freeze my blood with horror with the bare idea."

"I have not given the Tabbies a dressing yet," said Lord Cardross, "and I must give a finishing stroke to the picture; when I hear the tittle-tattle of an old maid, I recal to mind a story in a miscellaneous work of Bishop Horne; it is of an eagle kept by Sir William Temple, to whom

the servants once amongst its day's food threw in a live magpie; to their great astonishment the next day on taking the food, the magpie was alive, and chattering to the eagle, and he listening with apparent pleasure to the bird; the eagle not only suffered it to live, but always seemed to listen with pleasure to its chattering, and thus they lived in harmony together. Some respectable people, and people of understanding, will take in such Tabbies for a time, and really seem pleased with their tattle; I marvel at their taste, and pity them, and can hardly withhold contempt. Now, Miss Neville, had you been a thorough bred Tabby, instead of doing as you have done, you would have felt exultation in Mortimer de Montalt's troubles, have proclaimed them every where, and done nothing. Woe to him who increases the pains and misfortunes of his fellow-creatures, say I."

Isabella said, "I claim no merit for what I have done; I am only thankful it was in my power, and I feel a heartfelt gratification in the disposal of the money the possession of it never gave me." "Do set your cap at me, Isabella," said Sir Robert. "I can assure you, that act has done you great credit in my eyes; if you are very assiduous, my frozen heart may be thawed; but I warn you, widowers are hard to catch; but you certainly will stand a better chance than all the three Tabbies put together." "That is very flattering, indeed," said Isabella, "I begin to think myself more than mortal, to rival Mrs. Silke with all her grandeur and overbearing qualities; and Mrs. Frost, who is the universal fascinator of the male sex; and Mrs. Crabtree, who is the most prudent, sensible, all-perfectioned woman ever born, more calculated to make a good wife than any woman breathing."

"Now we have given the Tabbies a good bastinado," said Lord de Courcy, "and *à-propos*, may we not call them Ishmaelites; that their hand is against every body, and every body's hand against them. Let us turn from age and ugliness to youth and beauty; we are journeying to contemplate the remains of her who was one of Nature's fairest works; I wish I could boldly say, she also was one of her best works; but the shafts of calumny have fallen thick upon this beauty; and interest and lapse of time make it difficult to penetrate through the gloom of ages. But my pity poor Mary possesses, if I may not add admiration; she was too refined for those she lived amongst, which is in itself a crime; she was educated in a court, where she was not taught strictness of manners; she was loved, she was admired; and that is the foulest of crimes with many; I always wish to be able to say,—

'Encompassed in an angel's frame,
An angel's virtues lay.'

But how shall we purge away this dross, and bring Mary pure from the refiner's fire?"

"Hold!" said Lord Cardross, "you are invading my province; it is I who must pronounce the funeral oration of the beautiful Mary. Behold this fine pile of building rising majestically, clothed with woods; the dark shade reflected from them, casts a solemn mantle over the scene, which strikes the mind with the image of mourning royalty, weeping in ashes for the dissolution of empire, and lamenting the cruel vicissitudes of fortune, in which all its honours are extinguished, and nothing but memorials of calamity are left behind. Here lived for a melancholy succession of years, one who possessed superior beauty of person, and superior accomplishments, and refinement of manners: mortals are not

gifted to say more: we now see only through a glass darkly: man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. And only when the great day cometh, and the veil is removed, can we say, who is perfect. Mary is now in the hands of her Maker, and he will reward her according to her deserts."

This singular eulogium, delivered in the most impressive manner of Lord Cardross, rather cast a melancholy tinge over the minds of his hearers; and they entered with sympathetic feeling, into the prison-house of the ill-starred Queen of Scots. Every thing serves to keep up the impression of melancholy in surveying the house: it is kept up exactly as it was, whilst it was the residence of Queen Mary. Here are remains of her taste in work; her missal is carefully preserved, and from the appearance of the rooms, the traveller is apt to forget the lapse of time, and images Mary as still an

inhabitant of the house; and expects to meet with her in an apartment, or traversing the garden.

> "The house, the woods, and all remain,
> But Mary there they seek in vain."

Yet in returning an apparition seemed to arise before their eyes. About a mile and a half from the house they came to a beautiful little cottage, with roses, honeysuckles, and jessamine, adorning and perfuming the outside; a neat little garden, filled with fruit, vegetables, and flowers, was in front; and some broods of chickens were cooped upon the grass plat: the window of a good sized parlour was open, in which was a bookcase, a piano-forte, a sofa; drawings decorated the walls, and painted glass was in the window. "This is no vulgar habitation," they said, "a mind of superior intellect dwells here." Lord Cardross said, "I cannot pass this cottage, I must see it;"

he knocked at the door; a clean respectable looking woman came to the door, Lord Cardross asked, to whom that beautiful cottage belonged? "To Miss Bouverie," she replied; he then asked "if it might be seen?" The servant said, "her mistress was out walking," and she let them in. The parlour was about twenty feet square, well filled with good furniture; every thing shewed taste and science in the owner. On the grand piano stood the music-desk, on which was a song; the words caught the eye of Lord Cardross, and he entreated Jemima, so emphatically, to sing it, she complied.

Thy vain pursuit, fond youth, give o'er,
 What more, alas! can Mira do?
Thy worth I own, thy fate deplore,
 All are not happy that are true.

Suppress thy sighs, and weep no more,
 Should Heaven and Earth with thee
 combine,

'Twere all in vain; since any power
To crown thy love, must alter mine.

But if revenge can ease thy pain,
I'll sooth the ills I cannot cure;
Tell thee I drag a hopeless chain,
And all that I inflict, endure*.

The melody was sweet and simple: Lord Cardross deeply sighed. "Unhappy fair one," he said; "hard is thy lot in this life; your gentle soul would not wound another; you tear open your own heart to sooth the sorrows of others." The old servant would now take the party up stairs to the bed-room; that was the same size as the room below; a handsome chintz bed, large mahogany wardrobe; every thing here was handsome, and shewed good taste: this was evidently no vulgar mind come into riches. When they came down stairs they walked into the garden: here was taste. At the bottom of the garden, which overlooked a

* The Author is unknown.

wild and romantic country, was a rustic summer-house, overhung with clematis, antirrhinum, cymbellaria, and various creeping beautiful plants. Lord Cardross was delighted with all he saw; he went in and sat down: on looking round he saw some poetry, which he approached to read—that, alas! shewed that all was not peace and tranquillity in the mind of the owner of the cottage: it was

Here wild luxuriant nature charms the eye,
 And gentle zephyrs waft my sighs away:
Here contemplation bids each frailty fly,
 And echo whispers to the rising lay:
Yet sighs increase, and fill the vacant air,
The tide of sorrow flows, and sad despair.

Friend of my youth! within thy gentle breast,
 Which does all human excellence contain;
Oh! may all sorrows ever sink to rest,
 Serene as yonder lovely starry train.
Oh! may each earthly blessing dwell with thee,
And Heaven restore thy lost tranquillity.

Whilst I a prey to anguish still remain,
The world to me no charms can ere display
Its tasteless joys I courted late in vain;
Nay, solitude affords no cheering ray:
Cut off from every joy, from love and thee,
Death only can restore tranquillity*.

These beautiful lines Lord Cardross read in his most impassioned style: the latter part seemed to thrill through the hearts of himself and Isabella; they felt linked to the melancholy mourner by a sympathetic bond. After walking about the garden, they returned to the parlour; the attentive servant had placed fruit, fresh gathered, on the table, and begged them to sit down. She said her mistress would be so sorry she was not at home. The excellent currant and raisin wine, were also placed upon the hospitable board: all seemed like enchantment. The attentive servant took some of

* Sent by a Friend.

her home-brewed beer to the attendants who waited with the horses, and was much pleased with their encomiums on her hospitality and liquor. Before the ladies and gentlemen went away, she requested them to see her kitchen. Here was a large room, well fitted up with culinary articles; there seemed no comfort wanting in the house, but peace of mind to the owner. They asked the history of the lady. "Miss Bouverie," she said, "came there three years since; no one knew from whence she came, nor had any one ever come to see her: she received no letters, and seemed to have no communication with the world. That cottage was empty, which she took and fitted up, and she had lived as her servant ever since. She was the best of ladies, she visited all the sick poor, gave them food and medicine, and made baby-linen for those who lay-in, and overlooked the village school: she was a great lady for going to

church, and prevailed with more to stay the sacrament, than the clergyman could. She got a deal of linen spun, and stockings knit, in the parish: she did no end of good. Many ladies and gentlemen wished to visit her, but she declined all society: she has a dog we call Master Bouverie, she is so fond of him; to be sure he's uncommon fond of her, and takes great care of the house, and understands all you say, just like a christian. We think she is a lady crossed in love, she don't seem to care for no men; but she is a nice handsome lady; I war'nt ye she's made some gentlemen's hearts ache: she is uncommon clever, for she plays the music, and sings, and draws all these pictures, and goes a great deal about to take views; and she reads so much, I think she must have more in her head than the parson. Some folks say she must be the queen, who was shut up so long in the great house at Hardwicke, come to life again, for she is

particular fond of walking all about there; though they say that lady had her head cut off at last, when they got her a long way off in the south. For my part, I think nothing of these notions: she is a very good lady, be she who she will, and some folks arn't much for company. For my part I am vast fond of solitude, and never care for nothing more than solitude." "And you are not fond of talking," said Sir Robert, "I perceive;" and with so saying, he made her a present, and they left this sweet retreat. About half a mile from the house they saw this lady and her faithful dog: she was a tall elegant looking woman, with a fine countenance, strongly marked with melancholy; they thought her something resembling the pictures of Mary Queen of Scots. Her favourite dog was by her side, and he too was a beauty, and looked like a pet, with his clean, shining, sleek sides.

The party could talk of nothing but this

beautiful cottage, and fair inhabitant; and on speaking of them at dinner at Matlock, Mrs. Mary Frost said, "I dare say she is some kept mistress." "Kept, bum-fiddle!" said Dr. Stukeley; "your head, Molly, is always full of the foulest ideas, to shew your purity." Mrs. Silke, looking very furious, said, "It is a very natural idea to suppose she is some vile wretch." "What should she live there for," said Mrs. Lydia, "if she is not infamous? For my part I never suppose a woman can have any merit that is not ugly: she would not live moping there, if she could help it." "A woman who makes retirement her choice," said Lord Cardross, "must have an innocent mind; guilt cannot endure solitude. When guilt's dread scorpions lash a tortured mind, think you they can bear seclusion? Look to the annals of those in the highest rank, who have become votaries of vice, do they retire to elegant seclusion? No! they

are strolling about the streets of London, with the refuse of the human race: their reflection is intolerable to them: thought is drowned in drunkenness: from every appearance of this lady's house, and person, and pursuits, I would stake my life on her honour: her peace has been wrecked with some unhappy attachment; she cannot love another, and renounces the world. Trust me, you will see her shine in the highest heaven, at the day of judgment, when envying, backbiting, lying, and defaming, will meet with their proper punishment." As Lord Cardross said this with feeling and emphasis, he fixed his eyes full on the face of the Tabbies, who looked nettled and provoked, but made no reply.

Sir Robert de Grey having now taken his daughter to all the scenes he intended in this neighbourhood, they prepared to set out on their return homewards, and the next morning set off through Chesterfield,

Sheffield, Wakefield, and Leeds, to Harrogate, where they arrived safely at the Granby, in time for dinner, on the second day after their departure from Matlock.

CHAPTER III.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To *hide* the fault I see;
That *mercy* I to others shew,
That *mercy* shew to me.

WHEN the company came into the drawing-room the next morning after breakfast, Dr. Welsh was sitting reading a paper, and bursting into violent fits of laughter. The three Tabbies were sitting round him, and joined in his laughs. Dr. Stukeley went up to them and inquired into the joke, supposing it was some squib, written by one of the company; Dr. Welsh gave him the paper, and said, as articulately as his violent fits of laughing would permit, "It is a petition sent here to the company, desiring

they will give to a gentlewoman, living at Bonsal, who is in very reduced circumstances." Here the Tabbies set up shouts of laughter, and all said, "If she gets into debt, I do not care; I dare say she has been more admired than she ought to be, and worn better clothes, and gone more into public than she should; she's had her swing of pleasure, let her starve, she's nothing to us;" and the shouts of laughter were renewed with the four. Dr. Stukeley took the petition, and said, "The laugh is *seasonable*, and the occasion *decent* and *proper*;" and indignantly went into the eating-room, where some of the company still remained.

"Why how now, Hecate, you look angry," said Mr. Hatton." "Had it been a Tabby," said the Dr., "said this, I should have replied, 'have I not reason, Beldames as ye are?' I am in a rage with that unfeeling old hunks Welsh, with his fat paunch

and lean pate, and heart of adamant; he rolls in riches, and in vain is any Lazarus laid at his gate, full of sores; he only makes a jest of misfortune: as long as his guts are stuffed, he does not care if every body else was to starve: and the Tabbies, though they want to be thought charitable, give very little; and as the Dr. made a jest of it, they thought they might save their money, and their credit; and they have some hopes of courting him out of a legacy, so they must laugh at his jokes. I never look at that fellow, but I think of Dives: he must want a drop of cold water in the next world." "Well, Dr.," said Mr Hatton, "cease your anger, and let us see the paper; we are not all brutes; I doubt not some will give here." "I shall," said Dr. Stukeley, I shall set my name down for twenty pounds. Now that infernal old cat Molly Frost, when she was trying to catch Pindar, a man of large fortune, who lives near

where her father did, to get an excuse to write to him, and appear very charitable, she writes to tell him of a lady in distress, who had lived in that neighbourhood; and said she was trying to raise a subscription for her, and should give twenty pounds. Pindar saw through this, and told Molly he could not afford to give to the lady: he privately sent her fifty pounds, and from Molly she never got sixpence. If Sal thinks any body will give, she will tell lies about her; and Lydia will want the money paid into her hands to spend for her, to prevent her spending it improperly: she will buy her a linsey-woolsey gown, and take care she has no clothes improper for her, or ever gets into company. I've a great mind to preach next Sunday, and my sermon shall be upon the rich man and Lazarus. I will give Welsh a good trimming, I do despise the fellow so much: if he settled an annuity upon this lady of a hundred a year, he would

never feel it out of his income: such gluttons never think of another world."

The petition was given to the president, who brought it forward after dinner, and a hundred pounds was raised amongst the company. Dr. Welsh looked very foolish, and the Tabbies said, "They could not think of giving to a woman they had reason to think so ill of." "So," says Dr. Stukeley to Mrs. Silke, "you will subscribe the same munificent sum you did to the Bible Society." Sal here thundered out, "Are you a friend to that abominable Society? It is only a plot to overthrow the church." "And yet," replied Dr. Stukeley, "numberless members of the church, and people who derive large incomes from it, are zealous members: do you suppose they want to overthrow the church?" "I know it is scandalous," she said, "to give the Bible, without the Prayer-Book; and the Bible has neither note nor comment." "But,"

said Dr. Stukeley, "do you consider to whom these presents are made; it is not to the learned, who can enter into controversial divinity; but the ignorant: if we can instruct them in a few leading points of religion, it is a great thing. To get the lowest class of society to believe in a God, and to know there is another world to reward the good, and punish the wicked; and to understand, and keep the commandments; it is all we can hope to do. And of what use are notes and comments to them?" "The Bible always has been printed with them," said Sal, "and I do not chose it should be printed without them. I look upon all the members of the Bible Society as good-for-nothing rascals." "That is a harsh censure, Sally, upon so large a body, and there are titles amongst them: how can you speak againct Lords and Bishops?" "I do not care who are members of the Bible Society," said Mrs. Silke, "they are

all rascals: there was the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge gave away Bibles and Prayer-Books, and Religious Tracts, that was enough: and as for the three Secretaries who go travelling about to speak at the meetings for establishing the Bible Societies, I only look upon them as mountebanks, going about to exhibit upon a stage." "It is true, Sally," said the Dr., "there was the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, but they had sunk into supineness, and slumbered and slept, till the success of the Bible Society has roused them into exertion; and so far from injuring that institution, it has increased their funds. Many were ignorant of the existence of such a society: people are roused, and now give to one or the other: two societies of the kind are not too much for this kingdom: numbers now read of all ages, who never read before, and acknowledge the comfort they feel in reading

the Bible. "Aye," said Mrs. Silke, "you suppose they read them;—they only sell them;—pawnbrokers and grocers are full of them." "From my own knowledge," said Dr. Stukeley, "I can assert, numbers read their Bibles, and acknowledge with gratitude their satisfaction in having them to read." "You lie," said Sal. "Any where but in your arms," said Dr. Stukeley, and so ended the dispute.

After tea, some of the company sat down to cards. Mr. Fanshawe, Mrs. Goodlad, and two more sat down to quadrille. Mrs. Goodlad was playing alone, and in imminent danger of being basted, was hesitating if she dare finesse her king. "Come," says Mr. Fanshawe, "play away, you must be basted:" upon which Mrs. Goodlad says, "I know by your prating you've got basto, so I shall play my king." She run her king, and gained the game, to Mr. Fanshawe's great mortification, who censured her bold-

ness in trumping with her king, when she out to have trumped with manille; and been basted in consequence. "So I should," said Mrs. Goodlad, "if you had held your tongue; but I knew by your prating you had basto, so I could run my king with safety." This dispute over, Mrs. Goodlad soon after attracted the attention of the company by a story she told. She was asked after her old acquaintance Mrs. Wells, and spoke of her in a dress she wore some years since. "You know her," said she, "she is black as a coal—hair black as a coal. Well, she was powdered one day as red as a fox, and at top of these fiery locks, what do you think she put?" "A black hat," said Mr. Fanshawe. "Aye, a devil of a black hat," proceeded Mrs. Goodlad, "with a little white rose before, and another behind, and a plume of feathers nodding just like a hearse, and a diamond pin, 'twas but a sorry one neither; and a

shabby gown, for she was going to the opera; and in this dress she went to the bishop's; you know him, he tucked his little hands into his fat sides, and said, " Eh, he, hay,—Who have we got here?"—but she did not mind it.

Dr. Stukeley was so amused with this lady, he said to Mr. Hatton, " Asmodeus, I must know who this character is? She seems quite amusing. I never observed her before, her squint adds so much to her odd language." " She is quite a character," said Mr. Hatton. " She is the daughter of a bishop's housekeeper, but who was the father, is a question nobody asks." His lordship, pitying her fatherless state, resolved to give his chaplain, Dr. Goodlad, an archdeaconry, which was vacant, and when he imparted his intentions to him, also said, " And he should marry Miss Freeman." " For the archdeaconry," said Dr. Goodlad, " I shall be much obliged to your

lordship, but for Miss Freeman, I do not like her." "That," said his lordship, "is no objection to marrying her." Dr. Goodlad then shifted his ground, and said he was engaged to another. "That does not signify," said his lordship, "you can break with her: it is easy to disgust a woman, and make her break off." In short, it came to the point; no Miss Freeman, no archdeaconry, that was decisive. The chaplain took both, but Mrs. Goodlad had not a high reverence for her husband; once on inquiring of a neighbour, the character of a footman, the lady at last said, to tell you the honest truth, he is very stupid: Mrs. Goodlad gave a sagacious nod of her head, and cast of her eye, and replied, "He'll do the better for the Doctor." One of the choicest anecdotes of her is, that she rather loves a sup of the good creature, and, going one evening to a large rout, she arrived first: the lady, as usual, on her entrance, said,

"She hoped she was well." "No!" she replied, "a'nt well—a'nt well at all: was cursed bad all last night. What!—have you got any brandy in the house?" The lady replied, "Yes;" but not choosing to have her drawing-room smelling of brandy, just as the company were expected, she conducted Mrs. Goodlad into the parlour, and took out the brandy bottle, but just at that instant, a loud knock, announcing visitors;—the Abigail was summoned to administer the brandy, and the lady went up stairs to receive her visitors: the soubrette was delicately pouring out a thimble-full; but Mrs. Goodlad said, "Do not be afraid, my girl, pour away; I like a full glass." So a full glass was poured out, and tossed off. "Come," said the Lady, "I do not like to wet one eye, without wetting t'other.—Pour me out another glass;" so another good glass was poured out, and tossed off. Mrs. Goodlad then got pretty well, and

walked up stairs, and charmed the company by her brilliant sallies.

"Were you in the room," said Mr. Hatton, "when Mrs. Colburne was settling with her who should pay the first visit?" "No!" said Dr. Stukeley, "this is my debut of Mrs. Goodlad; I never observed her before." "Mrs. Colburne," proceeded Mr. Hatton, "said to Mrs. Goodlad, Pray what is to be the etiquette of our visiting; are you to call first on me, or do you expect I am to make the first visit?" "*Etquette*," said Mrs. Goodlad, "I know nothing of *etquette*, I know I've been as rude as a bear. I should have visited you before, if I had had any grace: but, however, I intend to visit you next week."

The attention of the company was now turned to another quadrille table, at which were seated Dr. Brown, the slowest of all slow mortals. Mr. Rennel, the most impetuous and impatient of hurrying beings.

Mrs. Preston, a good sort of officious woman, who took the part of all she thought persecuted; and Mr. Goddard, a person of frigid stillness, and job-like patience. Dr. Brown never played a card without first looking over his hand; then it was shut up; after a pause, opened again; then a card, half drawn out, and put back again; and each card underwent this ceremony before one was finally drawn and put upon the table; and, as soon as it was laid down, his head was put close to it to look at it: this ceremony was repeated with every card. What a contrast to Mr. Rennel! He was out of all patience.—Come, Dr. Brown, we are waiting for you, came out every moment; and Mrs. Preston, with her good nature, patronising the slow Doctor. "Come, Mr. Rennel, I will not have good Dr. Brown hurried; I am sure he plays very well." Mr. Goddard sat in this scene with the most inflexible patience: not even one

impatient word or look escaped him; and poor Mr. Rennel sat fretting and fuming, and was ready to pull the cards out of Dr. Brown's hand.

Dr. Stukeley said, "Has Asmodeus much to say of that quartetto." "Pas trop," said Mr. Hatton, "the choicest story of Dr. Brown is one of his preaching. He was once, in the middle of his sermon, taken with an imperious want; any one else would have concluded their sermon on full gallop; but this slow mortal was incapable of that, so he stopped, and said, 'I must go out, I'm sorry for it, but I can't help it:' so down comes the Doctor, and, in due time, returned again; the congregation, being in the interim, rather disposed to titter. He remounted the pulpit, made a low bow, and said, 'I beg all your pardons, but indeed I could not help it.' Mrs. Preston, good soul! keeps a list of saints: she is so full of candour, and the milk of human kind-

ness, she supposes all people saints, at first acquaintance; and, till they commit several outrages, cannot be prevailed upon to obliterate them from her saint list. What a contrast to the Tabbies! Could we mould the two characters together, it would be a mutual advantage: but we may say of this good woman, that e'en her failings lean to virtue's side. She would do good to all, if it was in her power. Mrs. Preston, Dr. Brown, and Mr. Goddard, are as free from gall as the Tabbies are overflowing with it. Mr. Rennel I am silent about:—a poet has said of him,—

> "As tigers, savage; rude as troubled seas;—
> "Power scarce can tame him—pleasure scarce can please."

A dialogue between him and his physician, somewhat rough, like himself, is characteristic of the two. On Mr. Rennel explaining his complaints, the physicians said, "You must ride on horse-back." "I cannot ride,"

said Mr. Rennel. "You must ride or die," said the physician. "Dreadful alternative!" exclaimed Mr. Rennel.

That poor old fogrum, Dr. Brown, happened to be left *tête-à-tête* with a young lady, in a walk, by a party of quizzers. No fiery comet, in all its blaze, is so tremendous to Dr. Brown, as a young lady; so he was all blushes and confusion at his awkward situation: they happened to be walking by the side of a river; and at last the Doctor, after a dead silence of some minutes' duration, rouzed from his trance, and said, like a man just awake, "Ma'am, can you swim?"

Mrs. Goodlad's table now again attracted attention: she was very fond of fancying every body had worms who picked their nose; or at least, it was a genteel mode of reminding a person they had done a disgusting thing in company; to look upon it as the effect of indisposition: and the vulgar

Mr. Fanshawe having a trick of being disgusting in company by so doing, happened to be guilty of this breach of good manners at the card-table. Mrs. Goodlad immediately turned her squinting eye upon him, with much humour, and said, "Mr. Fanshawe, I'm sure you are troubled with worms: you have a great trick of picking your nose: let me recommend Ching's worm lozengesto you." Whether this was intended as a quiz, or she really thought what she said, it had the effect of a piece of humour, and raised a loud laugh, to Mr. Fanshawe's no small chagrin. He wanted to be guilty of a brilliant sally, to give himself *eclat* after this disgrace; and, observing Mr. William Perton sitting between his wife and Mrs. Silke, he said to the gentleman, "Why you look like the three Graces." The blunder of making one of the Graces, of the masculine gender, and the trio, so divested of all grace and beauty, produced the effect

of raising a hearty laugh; for a plainer trio could hardly be collected, had they been picked out; and to adjudge the golden apple, would have been a hard task indeed.

The Pertons were going to Chatsworth. Mrs. Perton offered her place in the chay to Mrs. Silke. She would ride single horse along with Mr. Hatton. Mrs. Silke accepted the offer with many thanks, but said "Another could be added to the party;—she would only ride to Chatsworth, and walk back;" and proposed the offer being made to Mrs. Mary Frost to join the party. Mrs. Mary was accordingly invited, but she resolutely refused ever going to Chatsworth again: she had been there above twenty years before, and went in their own coach and four, with a great retinue of saddle horses. But the beef-steaks at the inn at Edensor were so abominably tough, nothing should ever induce her to go there again. Mr. Hatton could not keep his countenance.

What an animal it is! thinks he to himself, to refuse seeing this fine place, for the chance of a bad dinner. "I had rather fast the whole day than not see it, Mrs. Mary," said he, "do not let us lose the pleasure of your company, because the beef-steaks were tough twenty years ago: *that* ox may be all eat, and they may have tender meat now; and rather than lose the pleasure of your company, we can take a cold dinner from here, that hollow seat in Mrs. Perton's carriage will hold a dinner very well; and Mrs. Silke seated over it, will form a nice oven;—we shall have a smoking hot dinner by the time we get to Edensor." Mrs. William Perton set up a loud laugh at this sally; but Mrs. Mary was obdurate: the tough beef-steaks had given her such a distaste to Chatsworth, she resolutely refused ever going there again; so Mrs. Lydia was substituted in her place. The party was—Mr. William Perton and Mrs.

Silke, in the chay; Mr. Hatton, Mrs. William Perton, on horseback; Mrs. Lydia, to walk there; Mrs. Silke, back:—the procession to set out at eight in the morning, Mrs. Lydia starting an hour before.

The party set out as agreed on overnight, and arrived in safety at Chatsworth; they saw the house, Mrs. William Perton seated herself in one of the coronation chairs, and Mr. Hatton gallantly placed the footstool upon her head as a crown, which joke occasioned a loud laugh from Mrs. Perton. The party walked about the grounds where a large party of bumpkins were amusing themselves with staring about. They all went together to see the water-works:—all went on well, till they got to the fatal tree, environed by a circle of water-spouts; the trick to draw the unwary in, is a basin filled with water, which the gardener tells you is the warmth of the Buxton water. Mrs. Silke, always liking to *know every thing*,

went in to feel the water, as did also two complete clowns: the moment they were in the trap, the water came spouting upon them on all sides: Sal took to her heels,— the bumpkins, who were before her, were so astonished to find themselves completely enveloped in water, that not knowing which way to run, they stood stock still, and their sudden pause stopping Sal in her career, she kicked up, and lay sprawling on the ground. The gardener, in pity, stopped the works, and Sal was set upon her legs; well soaked through; but she comforted herself she should dry in her walk home;— they got to Edensor, where a comfortable dinner was ready, and the tough beef-steaks, of twenty years before, were certainly *all eat*; for the beef was of good grain, and tender: when the party were ready to get into motion again, it was agreed they should stop at Haddon Hall, and see that in their way home. Mrs. Lydia was now seated by

the side of Mr. William Perton, and Mr. Hatton sung as he handed her into the carriage,—

"Lovely Thais sit beside thee,
"Take the goods the Gods provide thee."

Mrs. Silke had bustled on before with umbrella in hand, and the procession got again into motion. Mrs. William Perton was rather scared at the old house at Haddon: she thought there must be ghosts about it. The old Hall, where the family used to dine, was no better than their hall at Hobnail farm: she could not think, for her part, how dukes and duchesses, and the like of them, could live in such places: she was much disappointed at going into the the place where the old boots and family cradle are kept; she thought, to be sure, it must be the ale cellar, and hoped to have tasted his Grace's ale.

Mrs. Silke now bustled off to walk home, and the rest of the party resumed their car-

riage and horses, and arrived in safety in less than two hours at Matlock: but it was not so with poor Sally; this had well nigh been her last expedition, for as she was posting through a field with cattle in it, a bull, who took offence at the red shawl, environing her limbs, bolted at her, and laid Sal sprawling on the ground, the second overthrow she had experienced this adventurous day. Sal was not one to be overcome with fright, so she seized hold of the bull's horns, and lustily screamed out murder! There was no one within hearing, but a man with one arm; he thought all this uproar must be some woman ravishing, so, thinks he, if I go to beat the man off, he will fall upon me; and, how can I defend myself against this tremendous ravisher with one arm? I shall be killed. Better let her be ravished:—so there he stood, and stirred not: but the screaming continuing, he thought he would go near enough to *see*,

and behold it was Mrs. Silke in high contest with a bull: she, with such fast hold of his horns, all his efforts could not extricate them, he could only paw her with his fore feet, which tore through stays and chemise. The man dare now venture to her aid, finding it was her life in danger, not her virtue; so up he came, and beat off the bull, and set Sal upon her legs again; the *toute ensemble* did not induce the man to suppose it was a gentlewoman he had rescued; so he said with great familiarity, "Why, old girl, you've had a tight tussel with the bull; it was hard work to see which would be master: but, old girl, next time you try to get the mastery of a bull, take hold of his horns with one hand, and, with the other, pinch his nostril; that's the way to be quite master of a bull. I did not know you was an old woman, so I thought mayhap you were ravishing, and that made me afraid to come sooner; and, thinks I, when its all

over, she won't care about it." Mrs. Silke was not much pleased with this address, so she resumed her umbrella, and bustled along again; she had ordered her maid to meet her five miles from Matlock, and she did not walk far before they met. The *soubrette* was grieved to see her mistress with her clothes so spoilt, she thought them so much the worse for her own wear. Mrs. Silke did not like to exhibit herself to the company, so she sneaked in at the back door, and got up to her room, and went to bed.

Dr. Stukeley got a glimpse of Mrs. Silke gliding into her room, all tattered and torn, and thought she must have met with some water-closet adventure, and he way-laid the Abigail, to question her how this tearing of clothes happened: and he come full of the adventure to the supper table. "Ladies," said he, "I tell you what, England is now as famous for her bull fights as Spain: in-

deed I may say far more so: they can only conquer a bull, by Picadors, and Matadores, and Chulos, Moleta's, and what not's. Here is one female, had almost conquered a bull without any of these adventitious aids; let us despise the Spanish bull fights!" The company looked at one another, and knew not what to make of this harangue. Mr. Fanshawe, who prided himself upon his penetration, said, "What, I suppose Phœbe has been fighting with a bull?"—"Phœbe!" said Dr. Stukeley, contemptuously, "henceforth let Phœbe hide her diminished head; a much greater heroine Matlock can now boast of." "I do not at all understand you, Doctor," said Mrs. William Perton. "Then know," said he, "one of your party, the renowned Mrs. Silke, had a bold and unprovoked attack made upon her by a bull! because, forsooth! he took offence at her wearing a red shawl; he knocks her down; she seizes on

his horns, and screams out murder! lustily. There was but one human being within hearing, and he had but one arm; he thought a woman could not make such an uproar about any thing but the loss of her virtue; so he thought it was some giant ravishing some stray damsel: thinks he, if I beat this terrible monster off, he will, in his fury, murder me! I dare not stir. But Sally screamed on so lustily, his heart began to be touched. Thinks he, I will go, and take a peep; no harm can come of that: so he advanced towards the noise, and, lo! and behold! it was Mrs. Silke laid sprawling on her back, grasping fast hold of the horns of a bull, who in vain tried to extricate them from her sturdy grasp: all the offensive weapons he could use was his fore feet: with them he tattered this hateful shawl, and made even gown, stays, and smicket, suffer for being in such odious company. The man drew near, and being an excellent

Matador, he ended the fight. The bull was beat, and Sally set upon her legs again. But this man was far from supposing a bull would dare attack a baronet's daughter; and he had no idea of the rank she held in society; he took her for some sturdy farmer's wife: so he familiarly said, "Well, old girl, you've had a tight tussel with the bull; you had a mind to see which could be master: but I tell you what, mistress, bulls are very touchy, they do not like them red blankets; you had better keep it on your bed."

Mrs. Silke was not pleased with this adventure, so she bustled away from both man and bull, and soon after met with her Abigail: whom she had appointed to meet her, and got home without any more adventures. Mrs. William Perton burst into a loud laugh, "Why, Sal Silke," says she, "as Bill always calls her, could not keep upon her feet to-day: she got kicked up at Chats-

worth, where all the water comes spouting out all round: and there she laid sprawling on her back, and got into a fine pickle. I warrant it, when her bull-fight was over, as you call it, she was mucked all over: to be sure we had a good laugh, and Mrs. Silke was not over pleased; but the men got as wet as she for that matter. I sha'nt say nothing to Mrs. Silke about it, she would be so hopping mad; but the gardener axed me if she was my housekeeper: and, Mrs. Mary Frost, you need not have been afraid of the beef-steaks being tough, for I never eat better rump-steaks in my life. We had a particular good dinner." "It was very extraordinary," said Mrs. Mary, "they should give my father such a bad dinner when he went there in his coach and four, and the retinue of saddle-horses we had." "Come, Molly," said Dr. Stukeley, "you must not let off in this style before me. I lived in the same county with Frost. I

know he did not keep four horses to his carriage. If you ride your great horse before me, I can detect your lies. I do not doubt it was Frost's shabby style made them put you off with a bad dinner." Mrs. Mary looked as black as thunder, but she dare not boast on, for she knew Dr. Stukeley did not care what he said; so she said she had walked to Bonsal that morning to inquire about this Lady, as she was called. She was a very ordinary-looking woman, and she did fancy works for her bread: so she saw no good in giving to her." "Ah! Molly," said Dr. Stukeley, "Had Mr. Pindar been here, you would have given her twenty pounds; or, at least, you would have told him, you should do so: that trap did not go off, and I think your men-traps never will: there must be something very wrong in the *bait*: you should try the addition of spring guns: but bright eyes kill better than spring guns." "I am sure you

must know," said Mrs. Mary, " how many men I've refused : there was Dr. Tennant, he did not clean his teeth ; there was Mr. Gardiner, I thought he looked like a libertine: there was a gentleman at Harrogate, and another at Scarborough ; in short, I've had no end of offers." " Aye, Molly, your family always abounded in those *little tales*, as your neighbour Mrs. Chace charitably said; " I who am blunt and plain spoken, call them *lies*."

Mrs. Mary now turned to Dr. Welsh, whom she was trying to court out of a legacy. "I did not give to that Lady, as she was called, I very liberally told her, if she would own to me she had led a very extravagant dissipated life, and would confess to me, all she had done and thought in the course of her life, I might, perhaps, do something for her." Dr. Stukeley remarked to Mr. Hatton, "if an old maid ever gave, she could not do it without blowing a

blast upon her object of charity." "Aye," says Mr. Hatton, "an old maid may be compared to the Upas tree, it is poison and death to come within its vortex."

"How much you charm me with your true spirit of christian charity, Mrs. Mary," said Dr. Stukeley;" your reception of the prodigal son, would have been foul reproaches, and addition to his sufferings; how well that accords with the beautiful parable: and when you see a wounded traveller lying by the way-side, instead of pouring in oil and wine to his wounds, taking him to an inn and paying his expenses, you would first require a confession of sin, and then would apply a caustic to his wounds." "Yes," said Mr. Hatton, "Mrs. Mary heals wounds like Damien Carnicero, hot irons, hot oils, ardent spirits, bitter words, are her mild methods of ease; I would suffer all the plagues in Egypt, sooner than fall into her hands for cure. I look

upon it, old maids drive on to suicide with their loading distressed objects with foul language, instead of giving relief: tenderness is always due to distress, however brought on; and erring mortals are not entitled to act the part of judge and avenger: it is their duty to relief distress; or if they will do no good, at least to abstain from aggravating the evil by driving the distressed objects to desperation. Let Chatterton be an awful warning to the wealthy and prosperous, how they neglect the applications of distress; and let them not think raising a monument over those who die of want, will save their souls in the day of judgment: we are told when we are asked for *bread*, not to give a *stone*: but such, alas! is the charity of many."

"You were quite right not to give," said Dr. Welsh to Mrs. Mary, "I never give." "No," said Dr. Stukeley, "all distressed objects know and feel that *give*

is a word scratched out of your dictionary. The scripture says, He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord; but the Lord owes you nothing: I suppose you mean to leave some money in charity, endow a college or a cat, and hope that will atone for sending the hungry empty away." Dr. Welsh turned up his little nose and kept silent; he dare not enter the field against Dr. Stukeley.

Mrs. Lydia now began inveighing against the late Duke of Devonshire's first wife. "Aye, Lydia," said Dr. Stukeley, "she was handsome, that was enough for you; her faults may be traced to one of her parents, and her husband: you may find much to admire in her at Chatsworth; that house shews she had a mind; there is a fine collection of minerals, selected by herself; that house has various monuments of her taste: think of her maternal affection, and not how she repaid ill-requited love. Always look for the virtues of a character, not the

faults; you will then find we do not live among such a race of Yahoos, as misanthropists imagine."

Mrs. Beddington did not find the gentlemen so attentive to her daughters as she wished, and wanted to contrive some parties to get them away from other ladies; accordingly a party to Keddleston was settled for the next morning; Mrs. Beddington, the little Devil, and Mr. Williams, in the widow's chariot; Sweet Sensibility, and Mr. Hill, in the barouche seat. There was two strings to the bow in this party, and a little bit of a third: during the day there were two gentlemen secured for the two misses. At Keddleston is a medicinal spring, where invalids go to drink; and a public table kept, as at Matlock; there they were to dine: who knows but some scorbutic man of fortune might be there, and struck through heart, liver, and gizzard, with the Little Devil, or Sweet Sensibility;

and there was a little bit of a chance they might meet with some of the family, with a vacancy in their hearts, who would think it well filled up with one of her divine daughters. Full of such pleasing ideas, off set the party the next morning, before the company assembled at breakfast.

Dr. Stukeley was watching for Mrs. Silke coming into the breakfast room, and managed to get in just before her singing

> 'See the conquering hero comes,
> Sound your trumpets, beat your drums.'

He stopped when he got to her seat, and turning gallantly round said, "Allow me, thou first of Picadors, to hand you to your seat: henceforth let the Spaniards and their modes of attacking a bull be set at naught; their Picadors are mounted on horseback, how many horses are sometimes killed by one bull! and what a train of chulos, banderillaras, and matadors, do they require to conquer a single bull;—but thou, O match-

less maiden! thou hast overthrown, with only the aid of a one-armed man, a bull in all his fury, agonized with the sight of a red shawl. Let us send you over to Spain, as the most valuable of presents, to manage their bull-fights; what an expense will you save them: no horses, no picadors, matadors, chulos, banderilleros, or moleta's wanted; only the force of thy invincible arm: Joan of Arc was a fool to you." Mr. Fanshawe, who liked to come out with a squib, now said, "Dr., if Mrs. Silke is a matador, I should like to have her always in my hand when I am playing at quadrille." "You'll have an armful of joy, then," said the Dr., which occasioned a loud laugh; and Sally began devouring her breakfast with great eagerness, not relishing Dr. Stukeley treating her with so little ceremony.

Mr. Hatton, who thought it necessary sometimes to play the part of Mr. Harmony, now said, affecting a great deal of feeling

and sympathy, "Mrs. Silke, I hope you will walk no more by yourself, you find now it is not safe." "Oh! la," said she, a bull may not attack me any more; I shan't keep in the house, I assure you." "Why," said Mr. Fanshawe, "you seem to have quite a walking dromedary fever upon you." Sally did not relish these jokes, and as soon as she had devoured three rolls and a round of toast, she arose and left the room, and went out to walk; but as she found herself rather crippled, she applied to Mrs. Cummins to furnish her with a walking-stick; that she was unable to do." "Come give me something," said Mrs. Silke, "I don't care what it is." And Mrs. Cummins, in her search, could find nothing better than an old broomstick; so she produced that, with an apology. "Oh! that will do very well," and away hobbled Mrs. Silke.

"What an enormous glutton that woman is," said Dr. Stukeley, as Mrs. Silke went

out of the room. There is a good story of Sal, who has lost most of her nearest relations, that once when a friend called to condole with her on the death of a brother, she was devouring a great load of cold meat. "I am happy to see," said the friend, "that your grief has not destroyed your appetite." "Oh! no," said Sal, grief makes me so monstrous hungry, I am obliged when I lose a near relation, to keep a large joint of cold meat in the house, to be ready at all hours of the day: when I expected my sister's death, I had a round of beef salted, and the first thing I said after hearing of her death was, set the round of beef on directly to be boiled, then I shall have *something* to eat. That makes Sal so fond of getting into houses to eat and drink; for it is ruin to her pocket to feed herself all the year round. "Why," says Mr. Hatton, "she outdoes Hunca-munca; that delicate damsel only eat two

fowls, and half a pig, at a sitting: I think Sally could manage three fowls, and a whole pig; she quite leaves Dr. Doncaster in the back-ground, he reckons a goose an awkward thing at dinner, it is too much for one, and not enough for two: Sally Silke would make no more of a goose, than a common eater of a lark.

At the ball in the evening a tall stranger appeared, who had not much the look of a gentleman; and Miss Canning being the beauty of the room, this stranger, who wanted to appear somebody, brushed up to her, and asked her to dance: Miss Canning supposed this was some acquaintance, but looking in his face she could not recognise any one she knew; but she thought it ill manners to refuse him, and stood up to dance. No one observed this man before, and when they saw Miss Canning stand up with him, were anxious to know who he was; she could not inform them; the stranger

began talking of his large acquaintance with the nobility. "Do you know my friend the Marquis of Worthrop?" he said; "I have just left his house, where I spent the last month; we had a house full of grandees, it was quite delightful. They had now got to the top of the dance. "Come, we must not stand chattering here, we must dance away," said this elegant beau garçon, and accordingly he put himself in motion: but Miss Canning, though a very well-bred woman, was hardly able to keep her countenance; he could not do a step, nothing could be more awkward with both hands and feet than he was. Mr. Hatton, who loved a quiz, looked at Miss Canning and laughed. This gauché mortal was not without sense, and saw Mr. Hatton was quizzing him; so to retaliate on him, he says to Miss Canning, "Who is that smiling looking gentleman who fixes his eyes on you? I am sure I have seen

him somewhere before, but whether it is at Buxton, or at Lord Eastwick's, I cannot recollect." Miss Canning was delighted with this question, it was a fine opportunity to introduce him to Mr. Hatton, and revenge his laughing at her vulgar partner; so she replied, "I dare say it was at Lord Eastwick's, Mr. Hatton visits very much there; he will be delighted at meeting with his old friend; I will introduce you to him." "Aye," said the stranger, "it was at Lord Eastwick's, I now perfectly recollect Mr. Hatton, we used to play at billiards together." Miss Canning advanced, with her partner, up to Mr. Hatton, and said, "This gentleman has often met you at Lord Eastwick's, he wishes to renew his acquaintance with you." Mr. Hatton was thunderstruck with seeing Miss Canning lead up this man he was quizzing, and introduce him as an old acquaintance; however, he was too well bred to deny any know-

ledge of him, and, being a man of humour, a scene ensued deserving of being brought upon the stage. With one side of his face looking grave at this strange mortal, he said, "Those were very pleasant days we spent at Lord Eastwick's; his parties were delightful." On the other side he was looking at Miss Canning, and laughing. "Have you ever been at Matlock before?" pursued Mr. Hatton," it is a charming place, our Balls are very delightful, we have many fine women here;" then a look and laugh at Miss Canning. "You never could beat me at billiards," said the nnknown. "Billiards!" echoed Mr. Hatton in astonishment; then recollecting the part of the old friend he was acting, "Oh no," he said, "I am quite a chicken at billiards." The company were so taken with this scene, that they gathered round, and the *inconnu* seeming to smoke he was quizzed, withdrew, and never more appeared to the company, and

who he was never transpired. As soon as he disappeared, Mr. Hatton said in a ludicrous rage to Miss Canning, holding up his clenched fist at her, " How could you introduce this man to me, I could have killed you; I was afraid of my pockets, I'm sure he is some pickpocket." Miss Canning said, " She was delighted when he gave her an opportunity of introducing him; it was such a fair retort for his laughing at her vulgar partner." Mr. Hatton insisted upon it she had suggested to her partner the idea of claiming acquaintance with him, when he saw he was quizzed. " No," said Miss Canning, " that was too brilliant an idea for me; I give him great credit for that; but I was delighted when he gave me an opportunity of introducing him." The *inconnu* was now pulled to pieces by all the company. Miss Canning, however, derived a consolation for her vulgar partner, in the laugh she had against Mr. Hatton.

In brushed now the widow Beddington with her two nudities, and their beaux: the widow was in high spirits, every thing had succeeded to her utmost wishes. In the bath-room, where they went to taste the water, was one of the family; he bowed, she augured much good from that bow; when a glass of water was handed to the little Devil, she said, "Lord, how it stinks! it stinks like rotten eggs." The gentleman smiled, of course he must admire her daughter's humour. Then at dinner was a gouty, scorbutic man of fifty, with his face studded with pimples, and possessed of five thousand a year; he asked sweet Sensibility to drink a glass of wine; in short, that was looked upon as a done thing, and she began considering if she should go to Derby to buy wedding clothes, or write to London for them. Poor Sensibility had been very unfortunate in her love affairs, and met with three disappointments. Lord Pur-

brook had said to her at a ball, " Miss Beddington, take hold of my arm, and we will walk about the room:" this was looked upon as tantamount to an offer of his hand; so, of course, sweet Sensibility looked upon herself as Lady Purbrook elect: but, can it be believed? such is the base perfidious nature of man, nothing came of it; and Lord Purbrook soon after went abroad, and joined his regiment. Then the honourable Mr. Melcomb said to her at a concert, " He had been very ill, and it was all owing to her." What could that mean but making an offer? But, however, all men are alike, and nothing more came of that. And Captain Ketton behaved very dishonourably; for when he was absent on leave, he asked Sensibility, " if she should be ready to go to Yarmouth with him;" and he said besides, " do you think we can afford to keep a carriage?" What can men mean by saying these things to ladies, but

that they intend to marry them? But, however, in a fortnight we heard Captain Ketton was going to be married to Fanny Bullock; so there was an end of that. Poor Sensibility is mild and meek, she feels these things so much. The little Devil has more spirit; she was sure Captain Hills intended to marry her, and she was transported with rage, on hearing he was actually married to Miss Fletcher: so when they came into our neighbourhood, she boldly goes there one evening, when Captain and Mrs. Hills were sitting at tea. "Base, perjured wretch!" said she, darting looks of fire at the Captain, "how could you dare to marry Miss Fletcher? you know you offered to me." "Then I was drunk when I did," said he." "You were drunk then with bread and butter," said she. And after violent language on both sides, the little Devil returned home.

Sensibility had been very ill-used one

winter in London. She used to go out a great deal, and the dangling Mr. Whitelock was always sitting by her wherever she went; and Mrs. Beddington constantly catechized her daughter on their return home if the offer was made yet? No offer yet, was the constant reply; and he sat and sat by her, and nothing came of it. All this was repeated to Mr. Hatton without pause or interval: at last, when the widow got to the end of the string of her daughters' lovers, Mr. Hatton said, " 'Tis strange, 'tis passing strange; 'Tis pitiful, 'tis wondrous pitiful." "Aye, I dare say you have used many a woman so, and worse," said the widow, "and now you are an old fusty bachelor, and nobody cares for you—musty ale, and vinegar stale." Mr. Hatton hardly relished the widow's retort: thinks he, the ladies are too much for me here, I must not be so full of my jokes on them.

A great acquisition was made to the com-

pany next day, in Mrs. West, widow of a rich banker, who was very fond of telling of their riches and grandeur; and Mrs. Grantham, who came to shew off her bridal finery at Matlock; she was an ancient virgin, just married to an apothecary. Apozem was obliged to stay at home and pound drugs, and his fair bride accompanied the buxom widow, West. Mrs. West was fat, and coarse in her person, but a hearty, friendly woman. Mrs. Grantham was the complete cat in her person; she had one eye larger than the other, and a long thin yellow face; her elegant morning disabille, was a long wrapping gown, with large folds of muslin round her neck: the gentlemen said, "she looked like a vulture." Mr. Hatton was so captivated with this sweet creature, who struck his eyes the moment she entered the room, that he went and sat down by her. At tea Mrs. Grantham asked him to help her to some sugar.

"Oh! madam," said he, in the most pathetic voice, "can you eat sugar? it is cultivated by slaves." She replied, with a sweet smile, "I am no friend to slavery, but I must have sugar in my tea." Dr. Stukeley, who sat opposite this divine creature, observing her one eye larger than the other, said, "And yet I doubt not your eyes have made many slaves." This occasioned such a laugh in the company, in which Mrs. Grantham joined with great good humour, and said, with the sweetest smiles, "I have no objection to that sort of slavery."

Mrs. West said, "Dr. Stukeley, you are an early riser to be up so soon after your journey: I'm a quick dresser, Sir, said she; I am much troubled with fleas, and I can strip and catch a flea, and dress again in five minutes." "You have the comfort of being tormented with fleas," said Dr. Stukeley, "to be convinced your blood is in a

good state: my friend Mr. Lincoln, is very uneasy, because he is no longer bitten by fleas; he thinks it a sign his blood is in a bad state." "Aye," said Mrs. West, "what is one man's meat, is another's poison; I am so plagued with fleas, I should almost rejoice if my blood was in a bad state, to secure me from them: that poor valetudinarian, Mr. Lincoln, is unhappy because they forsake him; I almost think it is chiefly *amour propre*, that is wounded: he is so vain and conceited he cannot brook neglect, even from a flea: you never in the female sex see a more melancholy picture of a mortified coquet, than in him."

The conversation now turned upon Mr. Hopton's house having been broken open, and the plate stolen. "Oh!" said Mrs. West, "if they managed about their plate as we do, they would not lose it; we have a great deal of plate, a large clothes basket full, and it is brought every night into my

bed-room. One night, while poor Mr. West was alive, after I was in bed, I heard such a noise; bless me, Mr. West, said I, what are you about? He had tumbled backwards into the bread-basket, and beat it as flat as a pancake." Mrs. West related a story of her friend Mr. Winstone. "He was the most hurrying and impetuous of mortals, and always making blunders; and once when he had a party at supper, where poor Mr. West was, the gentlemen's great coats were laid in his dressing-room; when the company were going away, the servant brought the heap of great coats in, and laid them in a chair; Mr. Winstone helps on one gentleman with his great coat, then another; at last, he was putting Captain Leigh's spencer on, one arm was in the sleeve, "What an enormous sleeve you have to your spencer, Leigh," one said; Mr. Winstone began to pause in helping on the other, and ejaculated, "God bless my

soul! God bless my soul! Bill Palmer—Molly Winstone—What have we got here?" Captain Leigh, looked with surprise at the one arm covered: "Mr. Winstone," said he, "what are you dressing me up in?"—A shout of laughter burst from all the gentlemen; it was Mr. Winstone's small clothes he was putting Captain Leigh's arm into. His morning clothes had not been put away, the servant lays the great coats on them, and brings the small clothes as part of the gentlemen's property. "Now, Winstone, pull up the collar," said one. "Your spencer, Leigh, sets very loose across the back," says another. Each one had some squib. I almost killed myself with laughing, when Mr. West came home and told me the story.

Mrs. West raised a great laugh, and, finding one story of small clothes tell so well, she determined to try another; so, she said, "My sister, Mrs. Codd, is very fond

of keeping pretty maids, and she had to be sure a very pretty girl; pretty Fanny, as she was called; and when Mr. Codd's two brothers came to the house, one, a smart dashing man of fortune, with a coxcomb of a valet; and the captain, with a good-looking soldier, Pretty Fanny had both for lovers. The soldier came first, and was an accepted lover; but when the beau with his valet appeared, poor Halbert was quite cut out. Mr. Wailliant, the walet, Fanny declared was the man for her money; and she sat up of nights, like Alexander the Great, with Roxana and Statira, contending for her favours; but half love would not satisfy the craving heart of Halbert. He must have all, or none, and vowed if Fanny would not be his alone, he would die at her feet. Out came the razor,—Fanny screams murder! My poor sister Codd was laying, all alone, tumbling about, uncomfortable enough, for Mr. Codd was gone to Horn-

castle fair: she jumps out of bed, rushes in to the beau, Mr. Codd's room, and says, "For God's sake run down stairs, and prevent murder! So young Codd run down stairs, and put Halbert out of one door, and Vaillant out of the other, and drove Fanny into her bed room, and next morning he insisted on Fanny being sent away, which my sister humoured him in.

Mrs. West shook her sides with laughing. "I never heard such balderdash," said Mrs. Mary Frost, indignantly, "I cannot sit to hear any more:" and up rose the pensive Nun, devout and pure, sober, steadfast, and demure, and slowly paced out of the room.

Mrs. Beddington was relating on the other side of the table to Mr. Hill, what an afflicted widow her dear friend Lady Sandilands was: her great consolation would be to ascertain that she should be reunited to Lord Sandilands in the next world. She had consulted a clergyman on that subject,

and he had said he had no doubt it would be so; which idea, she said, had afforded her more consolation than any thing that had happened since the death of Lord Sandilands. "Then depend upon it, she is very near marrying again," said Mr. Hill.—"Oh! never—never!" said Mrs. Beddington, "she can never think of another husband: she did not go to bed of six weeks after Lord Sandilands' death." "I always distrust your disconsolate widows," said Mr. Hill;—"I stick to my text, she will marry again." "She is married," said the voice of a stranger, on the other side the table. "Impossible!" said Mrs. Beddington. The stranger said, "I live in her neighbourhood, and left home two days ago. Her Ladyship was married the day before to General Kent. He had been a fortnight at the castle, and had come down by the mail coach: the people at the inn were ordered not to say who had come down by

the mail to the castle. I am intimate there, and often call of a morning and walk in, *sans ceremonie ;* as I knew in which room her Ladyship is to be found; so marching in, *comme à l'ordinaire*, I surprised my Lady and the General billing and cooing. I, like Mrs. Beddington, supposed she would never have another husband; that her heart and affections were buried in the grave with Lord Sandilands; and, having no idea of lovers, and perceiving I interrupted *something*, I thought it was the family lawyer, come from London to settle business. So, unwilling to intrude, I shortened my visit, and came away; and, to my no small amusement, I found this fancied Latitat was a lover; and is now the second husband of her Ladyship. So, I suppose she hopes to be a female Perouse, and settle with two husbands in the next world. "Well, I shall never trust the grief of widows again," said Mrs. Beddington, "I thought she was a

real mourner, and a mourner for life."— "Ah! Mrs. Beddington," said Dr. Stukeley, "we must not forget the Ephesian Matron." "She is very wise," said Mrs. West," nothing consoles a widow so soon for the loss of a husband, as to take another; for my part, I am for having the torch of Hymen always burning."

This discourse recalled to Mrs. Grantham's mind her wedding, and she began relating to Mr. Hatton the occurrences of it. "My sister, who is older than myself, was my bridemaid:—there was a violent thunder-storm early in the morning, and, poor thing! she is much afraid of thunder: she does not care about the lightning, but the thunder makes such a noise, it frightens her." "My dear madam," said Mr. Hatton, "How could you dare to marry the day of a thunder-storm? I am sure I dare not. I should think it a prognostic; my wife would be a fury and scold; and we

should live in perpetual noise and strife.—If I had been Mr. Grantham, I should certainly have put off my wedding till next day. But I beg pardon for interrupting you." "So as I was a saying," continued Mrs. Grantham,—" my poor sister, in her fright, with the thunder, and agitation that I was married before her, hardly knew what she was about; so she pops on a pair of old shoes, burst out at the toes, and the carriage being ready, as soon as we come down stairs, she gets in, and thought nothing about her shoes. Mr. Grantham had got a very nice breakfast, and his youngest brother was there, who is very funny; and there was a Wedgewood-ware pie-dish on the table: so young Grantham says, "Who likes pigeon-pie at breakfast?" So every body said they did, and he takes up the top, and, lo! and behold! it was no pie, but a white dove flew about the room, which made a great laugh; but his jokes

did not end here, for, before breakfast was over, he brought in my favourite cat and dog with white favours tied round their necks. My sister went on very well till the evening, and then her troubles began: for Mr. Jenkins the lawyer, who was my nuptial father, said he would have a dance; so Mr. Grantham sent for a fiddler, and then nothing would satisfy Mr. Jenkins, but he must needs dance with my sister: and, poor girl! then her burst shoes came into her head, for the first time. But Mr. Jenkins would make her begin, and, while she was dancing, he kicked off her shoes, and said she should dance barefoot, as her younger sister was married before her; and, poor thing! she is much troubled with corns, and one of them had burst through her stocking; but Mr. Jenkins would have his joke out, and made her go all down the dance, and she is not very young, and was sadly tired.

Mr. Hatton was quite overset with the

narration of Mrs. Grantham's wedding.—"You tell your stories with so much humour, my dear madam," said he, "you almost kill me with laughing. But I have one favour to beg of you. I must entreat you will give me a description of your wedding night-cap. Mrs. Lydia Crabtree collects all the patterns she can get, and I should like to procure her the description of yours." "I am not expensive," Mrs. Grantham said, "mine was made of Scotch Holland, edged with nuns' lace." "Thank you, madam," said Mr. Hatton, "that shall go to Mrs. Lydia."

Mrs. West now wished to attract attention, and asked Dr. Stukeley if he had been in London lately. "No, madam," said he, "I am getting too old for London."—"Then," she said, "you probably do not know of the wonderful invention of gas lights, I went one evening to the lecture, and to be sure the room smelt bad enough,

but I thought no more about it, and as soon as I came home, my old servant says to me, "Lord, ma'am, how you stink!" and it was nothing but the gas-lights. Mrs. West, sure enough, gained her end in raising a laugh: she did not wish to be a cypher in company.

Mrs. Preston happened to enter at this moment, with a smile on her countenance. "Come and sit by me," said Dr. Stukeley, "and tell me what makes you smile." "I will," said Mrs. Preston, "for I know you love a laugh at Mrs. Mary Frost. I went, just now, to the water-closet;—there was Mrs. Mary;—so I was retreating; but she so earnestly begged me to come in, I seated myself, and presently after comes Mrs. Silke's maid, with a glass of wine, and a crust of bread. I thought it an odd place to eat and drink in, and looked surprised; so Mrs. Mary said, "I always suffer so much here, I am obliged to have a glass of

wine and a crust of bread to recruit me, or I should never get through it." "Molly shall hear of that at dinner," said Dr. Stukeley, "she makes such a parade of never drinking wine. I thought there was some place where she drank it; but I did not guess *where* it was.

CHAPTER IV.

From the dreadful effervescence of idleness, and malignity, fermenting together, may all I love be delivered!

THE Marquis of Worthcp was added to the company at dinner, and Mrs. West, who was very fond of great people, and much elated in their company, had a slight acquaintance with him. The Marquis, by way of saying something to her, asked if her neighbour Mr. Chauvel had finished his house? "Not quite, my Lord," she replied, with a sagacious nod of her head.—"Pray, what may he be about now?" said Mrs. Grantham, "I thought he had quite finished his house." Mrs. West laid down her knife and fork, and drew herself up with

great *state*, and said, "I will take some other opportunity of telling you, Mrs. Grantham, (it happened to be a water-closet Mr. Chauvel was building.) The Marquis, though an elegant man, had an uncommon *goût* for vulgar life; and could hardly restrain a laugh: some of the company did not shew so much forbearance; and Mrs. West, who loved to raise a laugh, joined very heartily with the laughers. Dr. Stukeley now asked Mrs. Mary Frost to drink a glass of wine with him. She drawled out, "I never drink wine." "No, no! Molly, that wo'nt do now," said the Doctor, "the cat is let out of the bag:—there is a place you drink wine in, and if you do not drink a glass of wine with me here, I am determined to come into the water-closet, and drink a glass of wine with you there."—This occasioned a burst of laughter from company and waiters: the whole room was convulsed with laughter. The Doctor now

said to the Marquis, "Your Lordship is a stranger here, and does not know what work has been going forward in the water-closet, since those three Ladies came.—There was such a caterwauling with the trio—and the hostler, I ran in, and found Mrs. Silke with her neck bare, wig on one side, cap on the other; in short, my modesty was so shocked, I pulled off my coat, wrapped it round Mrs. Silke, and led her to her room. Hatton followed me, and found Mrs. Frost in the same predicament; so he wrapped her up in his coat, and led her away. As for Mrs. Lydia, I suppose she had not had enough of the hostler, for she disappeared as soon as we broke in upon the caterwauling, and we saw no more of her. I never could make out before how this party came assembled there; but I suppose Mrs. Mary had been giving one of her wine parties. You may depend upon it Chauvel is building this water-closet for his

wife to give wine parties in, and make her assignations." The Doctor continued the laugh for a long time, to the no small chagrin of the Tabbies, who did not like being held up to ridicule to the Marquis, whom they wished to impress with a high idea of their own consequence.

Mr. Rennel now began thundering out against a bishop, who was more of a politician than he approved of; he was speaking of a sermon he preached; "he preached treason," said he, "I'd have exalted him, but it should have been to a gallows; when he dies, and goes to hell, I am sure the devil will get a new gridiron for him." Mrs. Preston was quite shocked at such language, and said, "Mr. Rennel, you forget yourself." "No, I do not," said he, "you know he preached treason." "Well," said Mrs. Preston, "if he did, leave him in the hands of his Maker; Heaven has been kind to him in this world, and knows what is

right; if he has not made a right use of his prosperity, he must answer for it, not you." "That's my good Mrs. Preston," said Dr. Stukeley, "you always think, and hope the best, it makes you at peace with yourself, and all the world: you can lay yourself down in peace and take your rest." "I wish I could," said a voice from the bottom of the table, "for I am sure Mr. Bourn has such terrible nights, I quite dread going to bed to him." The Doctor now looked at the speaker, and beheld a new arrival. Mr. Bourn was a little fat man, with grey unpowdered, uncurled locks, which hung down on each side of his face, like the ears of a dog; and his face was exactly like a pug dog, and his short unceremonious way of speaking was much like a bow-wow. Mrs. Bourn had served some years in capacity of strumpet, and was now elevated into his wife; she had a fat coarse figure, with learing eyes, and a

red face that indicated a love of the bottle; she affected all softness and delicacy of manner in company; for there Mr. Bourn was lord and master; she, lady and mistress at home. "My dear Mr, Bourn," she said, "do eat a bit of this trout, it is quite delicious." "No," barked out Mr. Bourn. "Then do eat a bit of turkey, my love." "No," was again barked out; and all her tenderness and assiduity was only repaid with a No. Mrs. Bourn, after eating a most hearty dinner herself, said, "Upon my soul, I was so monstrous hungry, I thought I could not have waited for dinner."

Mrs. Frost having a little recovered her spirits, wished to impress the Marquis with a high opinion of her delicacy and horror of mankind; so she said, "I always look under my bed before I get into bed of a night." "Well, and what do you see there, Molly?" said Dr. Stukeley. This occasioned a laugh. "There are some

people must be always laughing," said Mrs. Mary, "I see nothing to laugh at in looking under a bed, to see if a man is hid there to ravish me in the dead of the night, when I could get nobody to my assistance." "A good hint," said Mr. Hill to Mr. Williams, "we will not forget that Molly shall see *something* under her bed tonight."

Mrs. Mary wished to inspire the Marquis with a grand idea of the superlative dignity of her family, and said, "I conclude your lordship must have heard of the ancient family of the Frosts of Bothall Castle in Northumberland, so renowned in ancient history; my father was born there, and is the only branch now remaining." "Bothall Castle! Molly," said Dr. Stukeley, "Castle in the air you mean; I am sure your family never had any other castle belonging to them, than a castle in the air; any body who does not know your family, must sup-

pose from your style of letting off, that you are daughter to that renowned nobleman who has so numerous a progeny, *the Lord knows who.*

Mrs. Frost expatiated next on what an accomplished woman she *had* been, but an unfortunate fever so shattered her nerves, that on her recovery, she found the *remembrance* of her acquirements gone; else her voice *was* of superior compass to Catalani's, and she could sing Braham's songs in a superior style to himself; and, as an instrumental performer, she *was* on the piano superior to Clementi; and on the harp, to Weippert." "And the horns, Molly," said Dr. Stukeley, "you were superior on the horns to the Petrides and Leanders, and you rivalled Dragonetti on the double bass." "Fie, Doctor," said Mr. Hatton, "the horn, the horn, the lusty horn, is not a thing to laugh to scorn." Mrs. Mary looked indignant, and drawled on. "I *was*

an excellent linguist; I was thought to speak French with the true Parisian accent, none could discover I was not a native; and I spoke Italian with the liquid softness of the country." "And the language of Prester John's country, Molly," again interrupted the Doctor; "you were superior to Prester John himself, and the Patagonians, and the Cherokees, and Catabaws, and all the aws and ees of the continent of America you excelled. Then you could shout the war-whoop, set on the war-kettle, and perform the war-dance superior to the Yankees; Squinkinacousta herself could not enter the lists against you. Then you could roll in fresh cow-dung, and deck yourself with more taste in the entrails of animals, than the accomplished pupil of Mynheer Van Snickersnee. But all this *you lost*; as the great Dr. Johnson would say, when *I lost* my estate in Yorkshire."

Mrs. Mary could hear no more, the

laugh was now become universal; she arose with indignation, bounced out of the room with fury, and loudly banged the door after her, whilst she had the satisfaction of hearing, as she walked along the passage, a continuation of the chorus of laughter. Mr. Hatton now said, "Here is a name for Mrs. Frost, she shall be denominated Young Wilding; for surely she lies with his facility and fluency. I like her best when she is eulogizing herself, for then she does no harm; she imposes on no one; each one sees how unlike she is to the portrait she draws of herself; she is as outré in her own praises as she is in her abuse of others. Molly may sing—

> "Truth they say lies in a well,
> Why, I vow, I ne'er could see;
> Let the water-drinkers tell,
> There it always lays for me."

The ladies now rose to withdraw, and the Marquis of Worthrop opened the door

for them; Mrs. West made a full stop when she reached the door, and turning to him, said, "My Lord, will your lordship give me leave to kiss ——?" Here she made a full stop; it was speculated upon by the company: was it the Marquis she was going to solicit a salute from: but with a wide spread out of her arms, she added, "Lord Casewick." The Marquis said, "Casewick would be very happy in her notice; he should accompany her into the drawing-room." The child was about five years old, hardly old enough to object to a snuffy kiss, from one who was far from young, and had not the perfume of Arabia about her person.

There was an entertaining quadrille party set down this evening, Mrs. Goodlad, Mrs. West, the bride, (Mrs. Grantham) and Mr. Fanshawe. Mrs. Grantham, the first deal, triumphantly declared, she played alone; but, contrary to all expectation, she

was basted by a fine stroke of Mrs. Goodlad. "Ah! you little jade," she cried, "I thought I should baste you." "Yes," said Mrs. Grantham, "I lose all my mat hands; but it is the fate of us happy wives to lose at cards."

Mrs. West wished to come out with a brilliant sally, and observing Mr. Hill standing opposite to her, she said, "How well your *irresistibles* set." Mr. Hill could not forbear a laugh at the mistake, which it is necessary to explain for the edification of others: Mr. Hill, speaking of his pantaloons in the morning, called them inexpressibles; Mrs. West did not understand his meaning, and asked for an explanation, which he gave her; she thought it would give her a knowing air to make use of the term, but unluckily thought irresistible was the word. Mr. Hill explaining this to bystanders, caused a great laugh at Mrs. West's mistake: she loved a laugh, and it

did not matter to her if it was *with* her, or *at* her.

Mr. and Mrs. Bourn were sitting by Mrs. Preston, and Mrs. Bourn was complaining to her, that Mr. Bourn called her his infernal, and she did not like it. Mrs. Preston said, "I see no wit, Mr. Bourn, in such an appellation." "There may be no *wit*, Madam," said he, "but I am sure there is a great deal of *truth*." Mr. Hatton had given Mrs. Silke the appellation of Europa since her adventure with the bull: he thought it more *a-propos* than either Picador or Matador: he was talking to Dr. Stukeley, and said to him, "I think I shall give Europa her *coup de grace* in a few days; we have had nearly enough of these Tabbies: I have got such a rod in pickle for her, I am sure I shall hunt her out of the house as soon as I produce it." A gentleman and lady now entered the room; the gentleman had the faculty of looking two ways at

once; in plain English, he squinted. Dr. Stukeley said, "Come, Asmodeus, I must know who these are." Mr. Hatton replied, "it is Doctor and Mrs. Baumgarten; the lady's history is very *a-propos* to Mrs. Beddington's story of her friend lady Sandilands; she was engaged to a young man who died. Never was sorrow equal to hers; she was to spend the remainder of her days in bewailing her dear Mr. Meadows; her heart was incapable of consolation; she used to go and weep over his tomb; she was to wear mourning all her life; she would build a hermitage, dedicate it to his memory, and so many hours in the day would she spend there, and think of him; no stranger was to be admitted into her presence. Once spending a day with an old acquaintance who was recently married to a second wife, she sat lamenting and wailing over her loss; and declared her sorrow would end but with her life: the

gentleman said, "Oh! no, your heart will find some other attachment; you will marry." The mourner was enraged. "Had your wife said so," she replied, "who does not know me, I could have borne it; but you, who know me so well, to think so lightly of my widowed heart, as to suppose it capable of love or consolation, I cannot pardon it." "It is because I know you so well," said the gentleman, "I say so; *you will marry*, I again repeat." In vain was the lady indignant at the idea; the gentleman stuck to his text; and true enough, ere six months had passed over her head, she was Mrs. Baumgarten. "She has a charming name," said the Doctor, "I suppose she is one of your water-closet ladies." Mr. Fanshawe in the interim of a deal slipped out to ask the waiter the name of the arrival. "I do not justly know," he said, "the gentleman's name; it is Bum something, I believe Dr. Bumbailey is the

name." When the pool was over, Mr. Fanshawe seeing the Doctor standing near the table, said, "Dr. Bumbailey, would you like to cut in?" The gentleman looked surprised, but declined the offer.

A good joke was now going forward in the other part of the room. Sweet Sensibility at the last ball, to shew her taste and superior accomplishments, and astonish the company, had chalked the floor in red and white chalk; in the centre was a rose, and the remainder was a floor-cloth pattern. Mr. Hill, who knew he was an object that the widow and her daughters made a dead point at, affected to be much charmed with this display of elegant taste: he was loud in his praises of it, and took all the company to admire the rose before it was danced upon. So much taste, so much elegance of design, such ingenuity, such an unique performance; all this was in loud raptures, almost amounting to ecstasies.

Miss Canning, who saw the part he was acting, wrote upon this,

To mark the floor in many a mazy line,
See shades of chalk combine with bold design;
Our warmest praise, we all confess your due,
The fairest flower's unrivalled, seen in you.

Miss Canning had next morning repeated this to Mrs. Goodlad. "Is that satire, or fulsome compliment?" said she; "the girl does not deserve it." "I think it must be satire, who wrote it?" "I have not been told," was Miss Canning's reply. "Perhaps Hill wrote it," said Mrs. Goodlad; "he seems a little sweet upon the girl:" so she taxed Mr. Hill with being the author. He now came up to Miss Canning, and asked her to repeat the lines; while she was repeating them, Mr. Hill stood patting one forefinger upon the other, and when she ended, "That is very fair," he said, "those are very fair lines; but, 'pon honour, I am

not the author." "Oh!" said Miss Canning, "they are beautiful; it is a most elegant compliment; the misfortune is, it is a pity the subject is no better; she is but a plain ordinary girl; there were many much finer women in the room, to whom a compliment would have been much more appropriate." Miss Canning wished to appear envious, and have it supposed she was affronted the poet had not made her the subject of his panegyric. Mrs. Jackson now came up, and desired Miss Canning to repeat the lines, and while she was repeating them, Mrs. Jackson said, "Depend upon it that is Kit Smithies', it is quite in his style." "Oh!" said Miss Canning, with affected contempt, "Kit Smithies is only a married man; who cares for a compliment from a married man?" The widow Beddington now brushed up, and desired Miss Canning to repeat the lines: when she had finished, "Dear me!" said the delighted mamma, in

an ecstasy, " and pray who wrote this fine thing?" Miss Canning replied, " Mrs. Jackson says, she is sure it is Kit Smithies, it is quite in his style; others say, the gallant gay Lothario Mr. Hill." It was plain to perceive the widow dwelt with pleasure on the idea of Mr. Hill. " He is a most elegant man," she said, " and he certainly did say most gallant obliging things to my daughters: how delightfully he dances! it is quite a treat to see him dance: then what a voice he has! he does sing in the sweetest style; I declare I had rather hear him than Braham. How happy will be the young woman who gains his affections; I am sure he will be the best of husbands." " Do you hear any body talked of for him, Miss Canning?" " That is a question I should rather ask *you*," said Miss Canning, with much archness in her manner. The widow gave a simper of delight. Mr. Hill was all this time standing near, and the

adroit widow knew full well not a word would be lost. Miss Canning could not forbear giving a glance of her eye to Mr. Hill, who smiled, and shrugged his shoulders. Sweet Sensibility had tried a delightful *ruse de guerre* at this ball. Mr. Hill was talking to her before the dancing began, but said not a word of asking her to dance; so she thought she would give him a hint, and asked him, "Who he intended to dance with?" He said, "He should ask Miss Canning, as soon as she came into the room." "Oh!" she replied, "you may save yourself that trouble, for Miss Canning never dances." "That is very odd," he said, "what can be her reason? She is quite the figure for dancing, I am sure she is an excellent dancer." "I do not know," said Sweet Sensibility, "any thing of her reasons, I suppose she thinks herself too clever; all I know is, she never dances." "Well, I think she will talk to me at least,"

said Mr. Hill, "I shall go to her, for I see her now entering the room." So up he goes, and stood talking with Miss Canning, till the dancers began to stand up, when he said to her, "Can I have no hopes of prevailing upon you to dance with me?" "I really think," she replied, "if you ask me, I shall, for I happen to be very fond of dancing." "That is very odd," said Mr. Hill, and related the conversation with Sweet Sensibility. "Oh! what a youngster you are," said Miss Canning; "cannot you see through that? She wanted you to ask her to dance: if you had said you should make an offer to me, she would have told you I was going to be married, and given you a minute description of the gentleman, his house, and grounds, and my wedding clothes. Let me give you one piece of advice; Never be deterred from asking a lady to dance, because you are told she

never dances; or from making an offer, because you are told the lady is engaged: I can tell you a very melancholy story of the martyr of such a lie."

"A young officer, eldest son to a man of good fortune, was much attached to one of the finest women of the age; she had, of course, many admirers, and amongst them one who lived but in her sight, and sought out every means of being in her company: she was well bred, and good-humoured, and received the attentions of all with good manners. A mischievous ugly woman, who wanted this amiable young man for herself, though wholly unworthy of him, told him this lady was engaged to this most assiduous of lovers: he was miserable, and wished to leave the kingdom, and changed into a regiment going to the West Indies, where he got an advancement of rank, but soon fell a victim to the yellow fever. I could make

you laugh with the loves of this woman, and two complete yahoos, but I leave her to the worm in her own conscience."

Miss Canning was not the only one who employed their pen upon Miss Beddington. She was very fond of treating the world with a great display of neck, and never went out of the house without a veil over her face. There was written upon this,

Veil not your face, but veil your snowy breast,
Shew us your face, let fancy paint the rest;
Beauty's a sign to hang without the door,
'Till after marriage, men should see no more*.

An excellent piece of advice, deserving of being kept in mind by the fair sex.

Mr. Hill and Mr. Williams had amused themselves in dressing up a figure in men's clothes, and putting it under Mrs. Mary Frost's bed. The gentlemen were informed to be in readiness for the exhibition of Mrs.

* Written by the late J. B. Esq.

Mary, in *robe de chambre*, and *bonnet de nuit*, rushing out of her room, to fly from the ravisher. Accordingly, soon after the ladies left the room, such a yell was set up in Mrs. Mary Frost's apartment, and out she rushed, "Thieves! murder! rape! I'm ruined! I'm ravished! will nobody come to my help?" Messrs. Hill and Williams were the first gentlemen arrived on the spot, and caught this lovely creature in their arms: she pretended an hysteric fit, so they carried her into the eating-room, where all the gentlemen sat. One soused her with water, another brought a glass of wine, the Marquis rubbed her hands. Mr. Fanshawe went into her room; the miscreant was dragged from under the bed, and got away; a gun was fired out of the window to wound the ruffian. In the midst of this, in rushed Europa, with a little combing cloth on her shoulders, her wig off, and grey hair standing an end. "What

is all this devil of a noise about? are all the devils in hell got loose amongst you?" was her salutation; and seeing Mrs. Mary in her fit, she goes roughly up to her, "Come, Mrs. Mary, this must not be allowed, we shall have all the women in the house going into fits." So she dragged Mrs. Mary back to her room, who cast a languishing glance on the Marquis, and was sorry to be taken away from the gentlemen, but Europa she dare not battle with.

The Marquis said, "He would offer his landaulet to Mrs. West, Mrs. Goodlad, and Mrs. Mary Frost, to go to Keddleston; he should go on horseback, and thought he should derive some fun from the trio." He gave a most humorous description of a dinner party he was at once, at Mr. West's; it was an election dinner; Mrs. West in all her glory surrounded by grandees. The dinner was a profuse one of three courses, but the servants were full of blunders, and

the three courses sadly confused; with the first course a hare was the bottom dish; with the second, a sirloin of beef was set on as a side dish; and a loin of veal as a corner dish. All the time the second course was setting on the table, Mrs. West was calling to the servants, "I told you that was to go at the bottom; I told you that was to go in the middle; I told you that was a corner dish." Nothing but wiped knives were given after the first plate; and in setting on the third course, the juice of some preserved quinces was spilt all over the new white satin dress of Miss Phillippina Beaukin; and when she arose from table, she looked as if she had been committing murder; and to crown the whole, after the cheese was set on the table, there was a violent altercation heard at the door between two servants. "I say it shall," and "I say it shan't;" which, after being repeated several times, the servant at the

outside proving conqueror, a saddle of mutton was brought in, and placed at the head of the table. "Why, dear heart a-day!" said Mrs. West, "I told you that was to come in with the first course." "Yes, ma'am, but the cook forgot it then, but brought it now, you might see she did not forget it." And as the grand *finale* to the dinner, when the cloth was removed, Mr. Brigs took a pin from his coat, and cleaned his ear.

By this time there was a curious group rushed into the eating-room. Mrs. West, Mrs. Grantham, Mrs. Goodlad, Mrs. William Perton, and Mrs. Bourn, *en robes de chambre*, and *bonnets de nuit*. Mrs. West had much the appearance of Hecate: Mr. Hatton, who was always ready at a quotation, said, in a low voice to Dr. Stukeley, "Where's Puckle? here,—where's Stradling? here,—and Hopper too? and Hellway too?"

This witch-like group coming so immediately after the Marquis's description of Mrs. West's grand dinner, completely overset the gentlemen's gravity, and a universal burst of laughter greeted the witches. To the ladies' inquiries after the cause of the dreadful yell in Mrs. Mary Frost's room, the gentlemen were totally unable to reply for some time: at last, Dr. Stukeley said, with much affected concern, "Be not alarmed, ladies, Mrs. Mary Frost has had a hair-breadth escape of being ravished; she actually found a man under her bed." "Oh! is that all," said Mrs. Goodlad, "only let her burn a light in her room, she'll never be ravished." Mrs. West, and Mrs. William Perton joined the laugh. Mrs. Bourn said, "Upon my soul, I thought murder was committing." Mrs. Grantham was a little disposed to look serious, but Mr. Hatton coming to her, said, "Allow me to compliment the elegant simplicity of

your Scotch Holland night-cap, edged with nuns' lace, it just suits your style of countenance, and is infinitely becoming. She smiled sweetly at this compliment, and Hecate mustering the group, they hovered through the fog and filthy air, and vanished.

The next morning, when Mrs. Grantham came into the breakfast-room, young Besford, who was just come, and had not seen her, had been ringing the bell for his breakfast, and Mrs. Grantham coming in just after, and walking up the other side of the room, Mr. Besford took her for the maid, and beckoned with his finger to her. Mr. Hatton was much amused with the mistake, and told him it was a lovely bride, not a maid. Another amusing scene of the breakfast-table was Dr. Brown, who had a tea-board to himself. Messrs. Hill and Williams had sometimes amused themselves with playing tricks with his tea-pot; putting in cold meat, toast, and hot buttered roll. Dr.

Brown, to keep it out of their way, put it under his chair; the effect was rather ludicrous, when he wanted a dish of tea, to see him stooping for the tea-pot under his chair. Then he wanted some water for his butter, and went out to the spring in the garden, and came in full of miseries, that the Nymph of the spring was always sitting at the door, shelling peas or beans, or stringing currants. Then he attacked the maid about the bread, it was better the first day he came; "Yes," she said, "they had not had any more of that sort, ever sin." "Ever sin, indeed!" said Dr. Brown, "I wish the bread was better:" and to accumulate his miseries, he had given a draft to Mr. Cummins to change, who sent up the amount in Derby bank notes. "Aye," said he, "there is nothing but these Derby's and Joan's to be got here;" and, as the climax of his miseries, he went out shooting after breakfast, and brought home a hare, and brace of par-

tridges: of these he was very proud.—Messrs. Hill and Williams got the bag, took out the contents, and substituted a sucking pig, a goose, and a turkey, all ready for the spit. Dr. Brown would exhibit his prodigies of shooting to Mrs. Preston. Mr. Hatton averred the hare and partridges must have been like the quail, that said,

> "Since none but the Friar and Peter are here,
> I may fly where I list, I have nothing to fear."

Dr. Brown returned with exultation with his bag, unconscious of the metamorphosis his game had undergone:—he opened it, and, astonishing sight! out came the pig.—The Doctor stood confounded:—his hand went in again;—then come the goose;—and Mr. Hatton produced the turkey. "Dr." said he, "this is like Dr. Grigsby and Mrs. Allbut. Why, you must be a poacher." The Dr. was struck dumb, and Mrs. Preston, in pity to his wounded feelings, said,

"I am sure, good Dr. Brown has shot an excellent dinner." "If I was young," at last he uttered, "I would horsewhip those plaguy scoundrels."

Mrs. Mary Frost now entered, looking languishing after her fright. The Marquis perceived what she was at, and determined to have some fun. He gallantly rose, and hoped she had recovered her alarm of last night. "My weak frame is sadly shattered," she drawled out. "I am too delicate." Perceiving an empty chair by the Marquis, she seated herself in it, and began giving him a long uninteresting detail of an illness of hers. "I did not leave off my night-cap for three months. I thought I should have died, I was so bad." The Marquis was ready to add, "the peevish hearers almost wish you had."

"Then," she said, "she was so very high-principled, she always preserved the greatest purity and delicacy about her per-

son, that she might not excite any improper ideas in the men. One summer she was ordered to bathe in the sea, and had leaden weights put at the bottom of her bathing dress, to prevent any chance of exposure of person: to be sure the bathing woman did say, she never saw so fine a figure in her life."

"Whilst I was on the ocean," continued Mrs. Mary, "I experienced a great shock —the men made a water-party for me, and whilst we were out, an odious naked wretch who was bathing, was in danger of being drowned; our boat being the only one in sight, tacked about, and caught him just as he was sinking: judge what my delicacy suffered, to be in an open boat with a naked man: I declare I never was so shocked in my life. I insisted upon his not coming into the boat, but the men would have him saved, and one said, "Figs-end of your delicacy:" so I got set on shore again as

soon as possible; and punished the men by not going any more of their parties: there is such an odious smell about men, if any men come to visit me, I always send the chair they have sat upon into the garden to be sweetened."

Mrs. Mary next detailed the grandeur of her family: her brother's eldest son was the cleverest man ever born. He was to be brought up to the law, where he was sure to make an immense fortune. The Lord Chancellor was so struck with his appearance, when he saw him in court, he asked who he was? and when he was told his name was Frost, he immediately said, "Is that a son of the great Frost?" Dr. Stukeley was quite overset: "What did his Lordship mean, the great frost in 1739, Molly?" said he. The Marquis was glad of an opportunity of laughing, for Mrs. Mary's puffs were so ludicrous, he could hardly listen with gravity. Mr. Hatton said to Dr.

Stukeley, "Mrs. Mary's mild accents of love put me in mind of Captain Absolute's, I am ready to say like Sir Anthony,—What are you croaking like a toad in a quinsy for?" "To catch the Marquis," she will reply, said the Doctor, if she speaks truth.

Mrs. Mary now complained she had caught cold last night in her eye with running out of her room: it was quite bloodshot: she was quite distressed to be so disfigured: the Marquis, who was playing the gallant, gay, Lothario, immediately exclaimed, with great vivacity,

"Then let it be said,
Thine eye is all red,
Nor therefore, dear Mary, be moody;
Since so many die,
By the stroke of that eye
No wonder the weapon is bloody."

Mrs. Mary bowed, and simpered, and the company round much enjoyed the good

acting of the Marquis, and Mrs. Mary so greedily swallowing his quizzing.

The Marquis now informed Mrs. Mary that Mrs. Goodlad and Mrs. West were going to Keddleston in his landaulet, and he thought the ride would do her good. Mrs. Mary was so elated with the offer, she now thought it a done thing: she certainly should be Marchioness of Worthrop before the next fortnight was over: she would make the great Frost the steward, and there would be fine pickings for the family out of the estate; and she should present her nieces at court; of course they would marry noblemen; and her nephews she should get places about court for. All the family would get into high life: her sister Tubney she should get some appointment for at Windsor.

The *soi-disant* Marchioness now arose to prepare for Keddleston; to go in a coronet landaulet, and four! What rapture! She

hardly knew if she stood on her head or her feet. The Marquis handed the three ladies in, and, mounting his horse, rode on before. In the course of the ride, as he was sitting carelessly, the horse startled, and nearly threw him; but he recovered his seat, and rode on. Mrs. Mary thought this a delightful opportunity to shew her sensibility, so off she kicked into an hysteric. Mrs. Goodlad stopped the carriage, and said, "Mr. John, you must take Mrs. Mary out, and lay her on the grass." The footman took her in his arms, and laid her sprawling on her back, on the grass, where she laid kicking and screaming, "I'm sure he is killed. I saw his skull fractured." Mrs. Goodlad, who had the greatest contempt for such nonsense, said, "Mr. John, we must have some water; cannot you take off your shoe and go down to that pond and get some; or, you can have my thimble; it would be a pity to spoil your hat with putting water

in it." The ludicrous look and manner of Mrs. Goodlad made the footman burst out a laughing; and the two ladies joined heartily in the laugh. Mrs. Mary finding herself only an object of derision, and, hearing nothing of the Marquis attending to her, she jumps up, and says, "I am quite well." So they packed themselves up in the carriage again, and drove on.

The Marquis rode on, unconscious the carriage had stopped. The mortification of the Marquis riding on, almost counterbalanced the exultation of Mrs. Mary in her coronet carriage: it looked so very inattentive of his lordship: she thought his eye would never be off the carriage that contained his soul's idol: to add to this, the Marquis arrived first at Keddleston, was invited to dine there, and Mrs. Mary saw no more of him till his return to Matlock. Mrs. West felt duly elated with the honour of a ride in a Marquis's carriage; it would

be a fine thing to talk of when she got home. Mrs. Goodlad enjoyed her air and exercise without feeling elevated by riding in the carriage of a Marquis.

Mrs. Goodlad invited Mrs. Silke to her quadrille table in the evening, and, in the midst of playing out a hand, there was a full stop; no cards proceeded from the hand of Mrs. Silke; and, on looking at her, she was fast asleep. "Come, Mrs. Silke," said Mr. Fanshawe, "what, are you groggy?" "No! that is *her* way," said Mrs. Goodlad, "she is an early riser, and takes such violent exercise, that when she comes to sit quiet, she's asleep in a minute. She goes to the concerts at Bath to take a nap; once, when Lindley was playing a fine concerto, she was fast asleep, nodding as if she was beating the devil's tattoo with her head, and a lady sitting behind her, thought she was in raptures, and beating time with her head; so at intervals, she said, "Is it not

fine, Mrs. Silke?" She then roused, and said, "Yes, very fine!" and sunk again into the arms of Somnus; and so she kept on till just the last, when a lady set her feet against the back of Mrs. Silke's seat, which roused her, and she told the lady, not very civilly, to take her feet down. The lady coolly said, "She chose to keep them there." "Then," says Mrs. Silke, in a fury, "if you do not take your feet down, I'll run pins through your toes." The lady dared not irritate this Amazon, and withdrew her feet; and, being now roused, Mrs. Silke said, "Will this piece never end?"— And exposed her want of taste to all around. "Come, we must wake her," said Mrs. Goodlad. "Do, Mr. Fanshawe, get a pair of gloves;" he thought it would be so witty, he got up, gave a loud smack to Mrs. Silke, who then waked, and played out her hand.

Mrs. Goodlad next deal played alone, and owing to Mrs. Silke's very bad play, which

she was adroit enough to take advantage of, she won the *sans prendre vole.* This put Sal into such a fury, she was more like a *poissarde* than a gentlewoman; and Mrs. Goodlad enjoyed her victory gained by her fine play, in taking advantage of her enemy's blunder; and she was amused with Sal's wrath at having twelve fish to pay her: and Mr. Fanshawe, who could not pronounce H, said, " Ma'am, Mrs. Goodlad is quite the Oyle of Matlock, there is no playing against her." The company were all drawn to the card table by Mrs. Silke's anger, and Mrs. Goodlad's laughter; and hearing Mr. Fanshawe say she was the oil, " I think," says Dr. Stukeley, " she is more like a train of gunpowder, she has blown up Mrs. Silke into such wrath. 'Let not rage thy bosom fire,' Sally," said the Doctor, " luck may favour you in the course of the evening." " I cannot play with that nasty poison woman," said Mrs. Silke. " Mrs.

Grantham, I shall be obliged to you to take my cards;" so Mrs. Grantham seated herself at the table, and Sal bounced out of the room. When the company retired from the table, Mr. Hatton observed what feuds arose at the card-table, where people sit down to amuse themselves; and wrote upon the subject the following *jeu d'esprit*:—

For Gallia's monarch, by the fiend tormented,
To soothe his mind, were cards invented;
But in a course of years, as all things change,
'Tis now too plain that they the mind derange.

"Very true, indeed," said Dr. Stukeley, "I am often shocked at the violence and vulgarity displayed at the card-table; it is a good mean to throw people off their guard and shew their real character: few people are well-bred when they get to money-matters." Mr. Fanshawe said, "Ma'am, Mrs. Silke is like a child that goes to sleep in the day, she wakes in ill-humour." Mrs. Goodlad said, "I never enjoyed a fine stroke so

much in all my life, as this: poor Sally will not recover her temper to-night. I would not be her maid for something." Mr. Fanshawe said to Mrs. Goodlad, "You know, my friend Mr. Grimes, e as taken a ouse at Ampstead, for his family; and now they've got to Ampstead, they are so hairy." Mrs. Goodlad said, "Is not your friend, Mr. Hope, building a house." "Yes, ma'am," replied Mr. Fanshawe, "my friend Ope as ad a ouse in is ead some time, and now e's building."

Mr. Hatton related to Dr. Stukeley a visit Mrs. West made to her friend Lady Courteen: the house was always full of young men, and my Lady loved pranks; so they abounded in the house. One night, Mrs. West had gone early to bed, having a bad cold; when the young men missed her, they enquired where she was, and, finding she was gone to bed, one said it was very improper with her cold, she should not have

her bed warmed;—he would fetch a warming-pan and warm the bed for her; accordingly he went into the kitchen, got a warming-pan and went into Mrs. West's room, and thrust the pan into the bed, and poor Mrs. West was obliged to jump out, *en chemise*, to avoid sharing the fate of St. Lawrence. Another prank of that house was to make a young man fancy he was gone blind. Mr. Wakeman used to say how indifferent his eyes were, and he thought he should go blind; one evening he fell asleep, and the fire was taken off, and candles put out;—when he waked, he said, "What are you sitting in the dark for?" They said, "You are talking in your sleep: do rub your eyes and see the fire and candles." They pretended to be very busy; some were at cassino, talking of great and little cass, the aces, &c.;—another party at back-gammon were throwing cater, ace, and seize douce; nothing *seemed* at a stand; Mr. Wakeman

grew alarmed: "Well," said he, "then I certainly am gone blind. I can see nothing." This idea made him miserable, and he sat fretting at being blind. Sir William said, "Do go to bed; it is very disagreeable to hear you fretting about your eyes." The bell was rung for a hand candle, and the butler, who had his cue, brought in one unlighted, and put into his hand: all lights were put out in the part of the house he was led through to bed; and he fancied, till the sun shone upon him next morning, he was gone blind.

Mr. Hatton said, "Did you ever hear the tremendous adventure of Mrs. Mary Frost's hair-breadth escape of being ravished by an almost naked madman?" "No!" said Dr. Stukeley, "you make my hair stand an end with horror at the bare idea of that delicate creature the prey of a ravisher. How did it happen?" "The sweet creature," pursued Mr. Hatton, "went one day to walk in a park, and wandered into

a woody sequestered part, to enjoy her own romantic ideas;—there, as she walked, lovely and innocent, as Eve on the first day of her creation, she was horror-struck with the sight of, *as she thought*, an almost naked madman; no clothes could she spy from his waist downwards;—he was worse than a Highlander or Priuli. This obscene wretch was speaking loud and vehement, and his action was impassioned; sometimes clasping his hands in agony, then striking his forehead, now kneeling, seeming to implore some favour. Thinks she, if he sees me, it is all up with my virtue: to what purpose have I so carefully guarded it more than fifty years, and now must fall a prey in this lone retreat, to the insatiable passion of a frantic maniac. I will at least have a run for it. So this modern Daphne turned round, and fled at the utmost speed of alarmed virtue. After a time, she turned round to see if she was pursued, and almost

fainted with terror at the sight of the naked maniac in pursuit of his prey.

> "At the dreadful sight nakedness, the nymph fled more fast,
> At the fatal sight nakedness, she doubled her haste."

And rapture shone in her eyes at the sight of a large party of Ladies and Gentlemen, at no great distance. "My virtue is saved!" she exclaimed, as she rushed into the midst of them. "Have you encountered a mad bull in the park?" they inquired. "Mad bull! no!—ten thousand times worse," said Mrs. Frost: a naked madman: and I expected to be ravished.—Still the wretch pursues me!—see! there!" "Yes," said Major Miller, "I see Margrove, the tragic actor: he goes into retired parts of the park to rehearse, and he wears flesh-coloured pantaloons." The party set up a loud fit of laughter at this tremendous adventure of Mrs. Frost's; and Margrove

soon passed them, with a book in his hand. Major Miller said, "I suppose you have been rehearsing in the park, Mr. Margrove." "Yes," he replied, "I come out to-morrow in Octavian." "You have almost frightened this fair lady into fits," said Mr. Newman, "she took you for a naked madman; and thought you were pursuing her, to ravish her." "I must be a *madman* to ravish *her*," said Margrove, with a sneer, Mrs. Mary has nothing to fear from me." This renewed the laughter, and Mrs. Mary's chagrin. "Poor creature!" said Dr. Stukeley, "she is always supposing her virtue in some peril or other: even now she does not feel secure; *she* will go on trembling to seventy-two. Molly was not so afraid of Lord Sandgate. She made me laugh with three times repeating, in one evening, and each time with additions, of their meeting, on his return from abroad: firstly, he shook me by the hand, and was so

pleased to see me: secondly, he kissed me so affectionately, and seemed delighted to see me: thirdly, he embraced me in his arms, and was in raptures at the sight of me: my virtue took alarm then; I thought if she told the story three or four times more, there was no guessing the lengths she would go."

Mr. and Mrs. William Perton now entered the room, having been to Dovedale, and were just returned. Mr. Hatton entreated them to sit by him, and give their opinions of the scene; Mrs. William Perton thought it quite a curous place indeed, and Foxes' hole and Foxes' kitchen she had gone into, and they had lunched at Ashbourne, and come home the Vermicelli way, and had gone quite to the end; and to be sure it was so slippery she had come smack down twice, and they had gone up to the place where the gentleman was killed, and the lady cotched by her hair.

Next morning at breakfast, the company were settling about going to church; Mrs. Bourn exclaimed in the greatest surprise, "What! is it Sunday? Well, upon my soul, I thought it was Saturday." Dr. Stukeley was to preach, and give Dr. Welsh a trimming for his sordid, unfeeling conduct. Dr. Welsh and the Tabbies went to church, unconscious of the rod in pickle for them.

The anthem was, "Here shall soft Charity repair." Dr. Stukeley selected for his prayer before the Sermon, "O Lord! who hast taught us, that all our doings without charity are nothing worth; send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity; the very bond of peace and of all virtues: without which, whosoever liveth, is counted dead before thee: Grant this for Jesus Christ's sake our Lord."

The text was—

"The rich man died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes."

An awful warning to the rich, and the sensual, the unfeeling, and the avaricious! Of what use is now his much loved, hoarded heaps of gold? It only causeth those who inherit his fortune, to rejoice he is dead, no gratitude is felt for his remembrance; he could not carry his wealth with him beyond the grave; if he could have converted it to any purpose of his own gratification, they well knew it never would have been theirs; and now, gladly would he give all he once possessed, for a drop of cold water to quench his parched tongue; that tongue which denied relief to the needy, must now be parched to eternity; that voice which could scoff at the afflicted, must now be choked with drought; those eyes that turned away from the implorer of relief, must now be turned with envy, on those it formerly scorned. How gladly would he

recall the mirth he once thought so delightful, in scoffing at the afflicted and distressed; but that mirth must now be washed out in bitter tears. "I also will laugh at your calamity," saith our Lord, "I will mock when your fear cometh."

How different is the death of the friend of the afflicted! the peace and tranquillity of his mind will soothe his departing moments, should the separation of soul and body be attended with the most excruciating torment that human nature is liable to; he leaves behind him a memory beloved and respected through ages; the memory of the friend of the human race never dies; he is an example for the latest posterity; and when he comes to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, and hears said by numbers around him, I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited

me. Will he not look in this blessed moment, when he reaps the reward of his well-spent life, on that awful monument of everlasting misery, which he despised when living, and must abhor now dead?

"My brethren, I now speak of a character living, and one who has paid the debt of nature; the departed, though of a delicate frame of body, was an active, benevolent soul; he never heard of distress without a wish to relieve, and many are those who have been kept from sinking in the world by his well-timed bounty; many relieved on the bed of sickness, and many nurtured by his fostering hand in the days of infancy: much is the public indebted to his attention for various works of utility, and long and deeply will his loss be regretted.

"This modern Dives says to his soul, 'Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.' In vain is a Lazarus laid at his

gate full of sores; no oil or wine will he pour into his wounds. If he is asked to give to an object in distress, he laughs at their wants, and makes a jest at their misfortunes. He trusted while he abstained from the grossest of vices, he was at peace with his Maker, and he might lead a life of indolence, and make no use of his riches, but to pamper himself. Is that to be the disciple of Him who went about doing good; and who requires each one to use the talents committed to their care, be they one or be they ten? Whilst this Dives will only have reproach at the day of judgment, for what he did not do, and will have none to acknowledge the want secretly supplied, and distress concealed from the unfeeling, what will be the joy of those who have well employed their ten and their one talent; grateful friends, whose days of health they made happy, and when stretched on the bed of sickness, soothed and relieved

their wants; if misfortune clouded their path, their hand was open to relieve, and all their needy dependants (now no longer in want) acknowledging with grateful hearts, that in sickness and in health their wants had been relieved, and, in imitation of their great Creator, they had in their days of flesh wiped the tears from their eyes.

"What godlike powers are the rich intrusted with, did they make a proper use of their power! But alas! so far from making their riches a means of working out their salvation, in relieving their needy brethren; how often do we see the rich sordid, selfish, and unfeeling; rioting in luxury, destroying their health by pampering their appetites, and living in indolence, and their needy fellow-creatures left to pine in want. Instead of having it said to them at the day of judgment, when millions of

grateful hearts shall acknowledge the beneficent deeds of others, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord:' they shall hear, 'Remember thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, likewise Lazarus evil things; now he is *comforted*, and thou art *tormented*.'

"The heart that is capable of feeling and relieving the wants of others, must always be happy; no misfortunes can destroy their internal peace. Howsoever the world may frown, they look beyond this transitory scene to a peaceful haven, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. Like holy Job, they acquaint themselves with God, and are at peace with him; and in all his troubles of loss of health, children, friends, and wealth, his God was his defence, and his delight; he was his shield and buckler through the thorny way; and in the latter part of his

life, Job was again blest with all the comforts his integrity had been tried by depriving him of.

"Charity, my brethren, does not merely comprehend alms-giving, it extends to our words and actions. 'Though I give all my goods to feed the poor,' saith St. Paul, 'and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.' That alludes to our words and actions; not to be envious, slanderous, backbiters, revilers. Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity: charity thinketh no evil. Did we attend to these precepts, we should already be in Heaven.

"'Whatsoever ye would, that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them,' saith our blessed Lord. Let each one ask their own hearts, how far they are obedient to this precept. Alas! my brethren, how heavy a catalogue of sins of omission, good not done, and evil actually committed by

slanderers, backbiters, liars, and defamers, injuring the fair fame and fortune of others, have numbers to answer for, who thank God, like the Pharisee, they are not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers. To look to their own heart and conscience they think unnecessary; the one thing needful for them to attend to, is to look after and regulate the conduct of their neighbour.

"But is that what our blessed Lord tells us he shall require at our hands at the day of judgment? 'Search the Scriptures!' Get by heart the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel: 'What a mercy it is our blessed Lord is to be our Judge!' The erring David said, 'Let me fall into the hands of God, for his mercies are great.' Were we to judge one another, who would not wish for the hills to fall on them; and our own actions written by the

unerring hand of an angel, what we are to be judged by; not the testimony of a merciless neighbour.

"May we not suppose it will be one of the great torments of the damned, to see in prosperity those they despised on earth? Dives first wanted to have Lazarus sent to cool his tongue, then he wanted to send him on a mission to his brethren. Did it not add to his torment, to see Lazarus in Abraham's bosom?

"Let us, my brethren, avoid the dreadful passions of envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. Let us do good to all men, whilst it is day, lest the night cometh, when no man can work. 'Turn not away your face from any poor man, and then the face of the Lord shall not be turned from you.' 'Blessed is the man that provideth for the sick and needy, the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble.'

"Let us make these precepts our guide

and practice through life; we may then die in peace, rest in hope, and arise in glory; and hear from our blessed Saviour this triumphant doom, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

"Which that we may all obtain, God of his infinite mercy grant."

The Marquis of Worthrop came to Dr. Stukeley as soon as he came out of church, to thank him for his excellent sermon. Dr. Welsh turned up his little nose, and looked foolish. Mrs. Mary stood suspended, like Garrick between tragedy and comedy; she feared to offend Dr. Welsh, having set herself down in his will for a good legacy; and the Doctor seemed to feel the cap fitting very tight, whilst the sermon was preaching. Then, on the other side, it was a still greater object to pay court to the Marquis: she began to feel herself not so secure of being the Marchioness, as when

she set out in the coronet carriage for Keddleston. In this sad dilemma, ah! what could she do? Vanity prevailed, and she walked up to Dr. Stukeley to thank him, and said, "She never heard a better sermon in her life." "What! not even of the great Dr. Frost's preaching?" said Dr. Stukeley, "I shall be proud, indeed, if I can rival him." The Marquis now invited Dr. Stukeley into his carriage, and they drove into the Via Gellia. The Tabbies and Dr. Welsh walked home: Mrs. Mary, now the Marquis was out of hearing, pulled the sermon to pieces; she began to think it better to stick to Dr. Welsh; the Marquis seemed nearly a lost case; and before they again reached the Old Bath Hotel, she had reinstated herself in Dr. Welsh's will.

CHAPTER V.

"Dear me, how I long to be married."

Mr. Hatton came into the drawing-room with a smile, and made up to the Marquis and Dr. Stukeley, saying, "Here is a choice arrival, Mrs. Joy, and her five maiden daughters." Mrs. Silke might say, "I do not know any ladies who want husbands more than the Misses Joy: poor things, they can hardly keep themselves vartuous." The mother comes here with them every year, but in vain does she sing,

"Who'll buy my wares, who'll buy, who'll buy."

She has no *douceur* to pay down. They are quite a nuisance, way-laying every single

man in the house; one in one corner, and another in a second, and there is such a gang, you may escape four, or five, and be caught by a sixth; and they hang about the door-way, and they have a private parlour, for the sake of being more public; the use of it is to get men in there, away from the ladies; and they hang out of window, to catch all men going by: as to your Lordship you will certainly be ravished amongst them. I would not have you look upon yourself as above their ambition; they are as puffing about their family as Mrs. Frost: you will hear of the great Fenton, the banker, and the great Pudap, the great upholsterer, two of them are married to; how elegantly their houses are furnished; and the style they live in. As for you, Dr. Stukeley, do not feel too secure; if they are very sharp set, you may be ravished."

"I have got a treat for you," said Mr. Hatton, pulling a letter out of his pocket;

"it is a literary curiosity, a letter of Mrs. William Perton's, I have picked up: I will do it justice in the reading.

"My dear Mother,

"I no you will be partiklar glad to here I never war so happy in all my life as sin I comed to Matlock. Bill thinks the Trent salmon best of all, and you may eat strawberries here from morning to nite. So we went to Chatsworth, and a purdigious grand plaise it is. i shall never think nothing no more of lord haresfields now i have seen the duke of devonshire's, and set in a Crownation chare; the water works Is quite a wonder Of the world; And what Should mrs silke do, but she Must needs go and Feel the warmth of the buxton water, and its all nothing But a flam to make you as wet as muck, and the men kicked up her heels and she came out in a nise pickle, and the gardener thought to be sure she was my

housekeeper, and then she walked home all alone By herself, and a Bull knocked her down, and the man war nere leaving her to be kilt outright, because he thought It war nothing but a woman ravishing, howsever he set her on her legs again, and she tramped home, and the gentlemen hear make such Game of her, and call her all sorts of names. and there was such a to do in the water closet one nite, for my part i thinks the ladies war all fuddled, and thare was a sham man put under Mrs. Frost's bed, and she roared so we thought It was murder, and I went to Dovedaile and breakfasted and lunched at Ashborn, and foxes kitchen is quite a curous plaice, and we went up and down All over The Daile, and Into foxes hall, which is quite a large plaise, and there was a gentleman killed from the top of all the rock; first they thought he'd only cracked his napper, but they soon found he war kilt outright, and a lady hung

by her hare upon a bramble bush, the horse came smack into the river. and So To Be sure you never heard in all your life of such a fright as Bill and i war put into, i was in such a muck sweat you mite have wrung me out like a mop. I think i never was so comphlustered in my life before, but this country is all alive underground in a manner, and Bill thought to be sure it could be nothing at all but an old well, so down he throwd such a monstrous grate stone, and to be sure who should thare be in the bottom of all but a grate big mine, and a man in it, and he said in such a loud hollow voice, "God damn you, what are you about," and then you niver saw such a fright as Bill and i war in, and so we tooked to our heels and scampered home to be sure as if the Devil was after us, and we came home the vermicelli way, and you never saw such a curus museum as Is here, all full of curosities with odd names, and One the

very moral of lord warwicks as is in the green-house, and the spicemen are without end. I bought such a sight of um, for you no i love to go a stoning, and Bill spent a deal, it is to cost a ginny, besides packing and carriage. And we went out in a bote on the water, and Miss Rogget rows for all the world like a man. and Bill bought two such curosities as you never heard tell of in your hole life before, it is a pewtrified broom and a wig, which is dun in a well ware the water drops and drops, drip drop nite and day; and when we went to Tumsdaile to see the cascade, Bill stuck fast in such a squeezy little posts which they have for stiles here, that I was forced to pull and pull to get him through, for he's grown monstrous lusty here, and then on we went, and to be sure it war fit for Salvator Rosy, as Bill said, and the trout is always too much fried here, but the soup partiklar good, and there is a sight of fine dishes here

at dinner and supper, and Mr. Hatton is quite genteel to me and Bill, he pade six-pence apiece for us going up the cirkum-crankum walk, for I thought it war monstrous aggravating when I war walking to pay as if I war riding. Thare is a grate site of cumpany here, but they make great game of old made's, so I would not advise no more to come here never, but what a long rigmarole letter you will say i have written; so God bless you, and give my respects to my Uncle and aunt Gape.

I remain yours till death,

MARIA PERTON."

"N. B. i forgot to tell you all the hedges here are stone walls, I shall have enough to talk about when I come home sure enuff."

The Marquis was delighted with Mrs. William Perton's epistolary talents; he considered her as equal to Madame Sévigné in that line. Mrs. William Perton just then

coming in, the Marquis gallantly walked up to her, and seated her in a chair by himself, saying, "I must make peace between you and Mr. Hatton; for you must know, curiosity is a failing not confined to the female sex, when the temptation is powerful; fortune threw in his way a letter of yours, and your descriptions are so lively and amusing, he was sure your pen must be charming, and he gave way to the temptation, and has read the letter to us. Your descriptions are so excellent, Mrs. Hobnail may fancy herself upon the spot: I should like to make one of your social circle, when you get home, and amuse your friends with your narrations."

"Oh! for that matter," said Mrs. William Perton, "we an't so vast agreeable at home; it's always a tight tussel between me and the old girl, Bill's mother, when I'm at Knowton, to see which shall be master: she is as proud as Lucifer, but I do not care

a button for her, for all that: I make her and Bill know I shall be master. Mother says I do not give myself so many airs of a lady as she should; if she was a lady, she should sit in the parlour all day, and ring the bell a great deal; and she should have a ride in her coach every day; she supposes it would make her sick, but she should not matter that, if she was a lady, its only having two physicians, instead of one. I do not think much about Bill's sisters; they are only old maids, and I am a married woman, so I've a right to take place of them, and I wull."

"You are right," said the Marquis, "always keep up the dignity of matrons."

"Why, don't you think," said Mrs. William Perton, "that those there Tabbies," as Mr. Hatton calls them, "are as queer old frumps as ever was seen? Mrs. Mary Frost, talking about her great Frost. I'm sure I see nothing so great in her: and Mrs.

Silke thinks she's such a much more preferabler judgerer nor others; and she is so grumpy if any body gets above her: she says she has a right to set above me; but I am sure an old maid shan't, I can tell her." "Mrs. Silke will not be here long," said Mr. Hatton, "I shall give her her *coup de grace* to-morrow morning at breakfast." Mrs. William Perton said, "Come, Mr. Hatton, as you love letters, and behave very genteel to me, you shall see a letter from my mother." "I tell you what," said Mr. Hatton, "then I will pay the postage." Thirteen pence was paid to Mrs. William Perton, and she delivered to him her mother's elegant epistle.

"My dear Mrs. William Perton,

"I hope now you are a lady, you don't forget your poor mother who did so much for you to hamper Mr. Perton to marry you; for its all along of me you are as you

are. i can't manage my servants as I did Mr. Perton; I've had such a to do in the house. sam bradford has courted my Sal hoggins for a good stound, but i never thought they would marry till she left me at michaelmas: but sunday was six weeks i heard her asked at church, I was quite comphlustered, and when i comed home I telled her i should not think of keeping her all winter and let her go in the summer, when i had most to do; so she gave me such a sauce, and said she was not going to be married because she was with child, like my molly; she had never had nothing to do with no man, she had never been in the oven. i was riled, and we had such a clash, and so she's married and gone away, and squire Remel won't do nothing for me: all seems going Wrong; william's horse is so rumbustius he has thrown him twice, and he and Sam went to Baldock fair and stade out all nite, and I'm so scart a night's wher

there's no mankind in the house, and nancy and i lade and sweated all night; I was quite in a sweat with my own thoughts, we had not a dry thread about us; and neighbour Cann is coming about of a bad fever, and he says it has partly melted all his grease: while he was bad he was so litigious and quivocating, there was no getting him to take nothing, he pulled off a poultice and smacked it right in his wife's face. betty ardry was brought to bed of a bastard, a matter of five weeks since, and she is quite affronted; Mr. Groves won't church her, she says it is very aggravating when Mr. Perton behaves so genteel to them sart of folks; so she says the child shan't be christened out of revenge. But there's one piece of good luck, bet Symons is married at last: the parish have catched Jo Sparks, and had him before the justice, so they are married; but there's quite a quondary about bill Newman, for Mr. Gape seized him with Poll

Avey, and had him before squire Rennel, but Bet Green comes there and swears her child to him, so squire Rennel let him chuse which he'd have, an he's ta'en Bet Green, and she don't belong to our parish, so we are nonplushed. And then to be sure a candlemas night the blacksmith's shop took fire, and fine work we had; it is such a scare to be waked in the night by fire, I've never been myself since. i send nancy to John's every Sunday to sit along with the Parson, and keep him company to church, but he's such a grave sort of man, I don't think I shall get him for Nancy, he never stops a minute after church, and he is so particular I am sure I could not make him put off church if all my horses and cows were dead, so there's not much good in him. I have been to knowton to see master Perton, he grows a sweet boy if it warn't for that ugly wen on his face. I thought Mrs. Perton was very bumpchous with me when I axed ur

to dine with we at Branxton, but I shall tell her my mind if she don't mend her manners; i look on myself as quite as good as her, and I make more money of my farm, so I won't be played old gooseberry with. Tom Baker married at Hollowmas, for he said his sisters made a hand of so much butter he thought he had better marry, and his wife would be more careful. betsy baker has got such a genteel bonnet and cloke, it is quite a scandel; I dare say she would be mortal glad if the parson would have her, but there's a mort better nor her in the parish; There's a new knacker come, and he seems mighty clever. Tom Barnes has killed six of my turkies, and his mother says she counts he did it out of baseness; and I had such work in the churn for my wells cleaning out, and Jack Pett stole one of the ropes after it was all over mud, and hid it in the churn till he could get it away, and Bet never looked in, but poured the

cream a top of it, and beat and beat, she thought to be sure the witch was at the bottom, it war so long a coming, but it comed at last, and when she tooked it out there was rope and mud and butter, all beat together, but I could not have it holled away, so I sent it to market, and telled Betty to keep the cloth over it, and she sold it all, but I suppose the market has been quite in confusion ever since; they did not know my girl, and say if they can find out who it is, she shall be hooted out of the market. I've been in such a twitter about my currant wine, for it don't sizzle kindly, I most an eend am lucky about it. There's been quite a combustion with master Hall and his wife; he beat her sadly, so she sent to Mr. Gape to part um, but he says if he had not beat her, she would have beat him, so there's not much of a side, and she's very aggravating when he's no tolleration over her. Squire Rennel's wife looks to be

down in a fortnight, and there's been great doings at the great house at Staward with lady Selina's wedding; open house kept for a fortnight; but Mr. Haughton got himself affronted in the drawing-room, for Lady Lymington seeing his black wig, thought he was a man out of the park, and told him he had no business there. Folks think Bet Wilkins is with child, and say it is ever sin Hesenfield feast that she got fuddled there, and so Frank Jude had his will of her. Tom Fordham has been nine weeks in jail, for Sue Ingry went before Squire Rennel and swore a child to him, and the Squire said he must marry her, but Tom said he had never had nothing to do with her; and he would not, and the Squire said he must go to jail, and he said so he would, for he ownt have sue, and he has laid nine weeks in jail; and now it comes out she's no more with child than nothing at all, and Bill Parper were found drowned in the

road last wedsday, so he was crowned, and the Crowner brought it in it war only for an accident. I'm quite in the suds with my horsekeeper, for last market day he got fuddled, and when he come home would go up to the hayloft. Bill told him he'd fall; you shall tell me on't if I do, says he, and with that he comes spank, and broke two of his ribs; his wife thought he would have died, and she says he could not have been a better husband if he war king of england, so she is in a great taking. There is strange talk about Parson Macklin and his housekeeper; she is gone to her mothers as she says, to nurse a sister who is ill; and she has taken wine and a mort of things, and says her master's gin her leave to stop a month or more, if her sister a'nt well in that time; and she tells the neighbours she lays in the best bed, to keep it aired against master Macklin brings a wife home; nobody knows how she looked, for she had

not been out of the house of a long stound, and it neighbours went in, she war sitting with a grate piece of work in her lap, so folks think commacal about um: as to parson Drinkwater and his housekeeper there was near being murder, they had such a kick-up, she turned him out of the house, and held up the gun at him; he has been obliged to swear the peace against her, and now folks think he'll get a wife at last. But to be sure you will think I shall write for ever, and now you've such grate folks to talk to, I suppose you won't think much of my letter, so no more at present from your loving mother,

Mary Hobnail."

Mr. Hatton could hardly read for laughing, and Mrs. William Perton laughed as loud as any, so *politesse* was no restraint to them. "What a sweet picture of village simplicity and innocence Mrs. Hobnail gives," said the Marquis. "Branxton must

be quite a second Arcadia." "Oh! as for that matter," said Mrs. William Perton, "they do worserer things than that: if you come and lived in a village, you would not think much about their innocence."

Mr. Hatton was determined to rid the house of the Tabbies next morning. Mrs. Silke seated herself *comme à l'ordinaire*, and began devouring rolls, toast, bread and butter, and whatever came within her reach, and was declaiming against a family whom she knew must be living beyond their income from their great style; and she was sure they were getting into debt, and cheating people; and it was scandalous they got into company; such people ought to be hunted out of society. "Come, Sally," said Dr. Stukeley, "does conscience never prick you when you declaim so vehemently on the supposed faults of others, with what you know have been the faults of your own nearest connexions; you should learn to

have some feeling for others, from recollecting those only without sin are to throw the first stone: learn, Sally, and begin without delay, for seventy winters have already been permitted to roll over your head, to practise that sweet precept of the vicar in the "Velvet Cushion." Seventy years' acquaintance with myself has taught me, that it becomes us not anxiously to search out each other's nakedness, but rather to approach the faults of others backwards, and throw the mantle over them. God has patiently borne with you;—cannot you exercise charity to others?—how short a time you ought to reckon upon, for repentance, at your age: begin from this hour, only to study your own faults, and leave others to God, and their own conscience."

"Women will talk of what runs in their head," said Mr. Hatton: "Mrs. Silke has all her life been so used to debts and difficulties, she is like a drunken person, and

transfers her own faults to others. I'm not drunk, but you are. If my family cannot keep out of debt, how should others? So I'll e'en boldly say, they are in debt. But now Mrs. Silke, so far from thinking all faults should be exposed, I think some are too bad to speak of. I will ask you, if a story, I know to be a fact, ought to be blazed forth or not? As you take upon yourself to be a defamatory Quixote, you shall have the pleasure of blazing it abroad, if you wish it. A young Gentleman spent his Christmas at Mr. B——s, at G——h, near N——e. You see I am delicate about names; there was a large party in the house, and they subscribed amongst themselves seventy pound, to be laid out in lottery tickets; the money was given to this Gentleman, who was going to London to purchase as many tickets and shares as it would allow; but from that day to this they never heard another word from him: the

party were so delicate, they have not exposed him. Will you?" "Certainly," said Sal Silke, "why, he is quite a sharper, he and all his family should be exposed, to prevent his doing so again: he must have been very ill brought up: those that brought him up, ought to be exposed: it is very wrong to pretend delicacy to any body. I always tell all the faults I know, or even suspect." "But he is dead," said Mr. Hatton. He is gone to give account to his Maker and Redeemer;—will not that appease you?" "I have no notion," said Mrs. Silke, "of pretending delicacy to the dead, for concealing faults; his family may bear the disgrace, and ought." "Then," said Mr. Hatton, "I will throw aside delicacy, and tell you his name was Edward Silke. Now, will you proclaim it to the winds and waves?" "And Nathan said unto David, thou art the man!" said Dr. Stukeley. All eyes were turned in silence

upon Sal Silke. Had she not been such a defamatory Quixotte, she might have been pitied; but who could pity Sal Silke, though struck dumb and her blowzing complexion almost pale. Having devoured an enormous breakfast, she arose, and requested Mesdames Mary Frost, and Lydia Crabtree to follow her to her room. "When seated there," she said, "I think there is a very disagreeable party in the house, very disagreeable indeed, nasty, poison, weak, ill-informed people. I wish to set out for Buxton directly; I shall tell Molly to pack up, and I shall take my umbrella, and set out, and walk; you will get ready as soon as you can, and set out. I shall perhaps reach Buxton before you overtake me; it is only twenty miles; so I can order beds ready for you: we will go to St. Anne's hotel: so off set the Tabbies, without any one regretting their departure. Mrs. Mary Frost was a little grieved to go, for it an-

nihilated her designs on the Marquis and Dr. Welsh.

Mr. Hatton said, as soon as the room was cleared of the Tabbies, "These defamatory Quixottes are quite anti St. Godrics: that mad-headed mortal wreaked all his spite and vengeance on himself: these malignants make others suffer as severely as he did himself. I had as lieve wear an iron shirt, and eat bread mixed with ashes, four months old, as endure the malice of these venemous tongues. 'The poison of asps is under their lips.' There is not a pin to choose amongst them; they are all Abigail Evil-tongues." "You shall write an essay on Old Maids, Hatton," said Dr. Stukeley, "you dish them up nicely." "Oh!" said Mr. Hatton, "I should be very short with old maids." 'Off with their heads—so much for Buckingham.' I think I deserve the thanks of the company for ridding the house of them."

"Who wants a wife?" was now the universal cry throughout the house, by those forlorn, distressed damsels, the Misses Joy. The Marquis came hastily into the drawing-room, and seating himself by Dr. Stukeley, and Mr. Hatton, he said, "I've heard myself proclaimed, and by the happy hollow of a tree escaped pursuit. No place, no port is free, where guards, with most unusual vigilance, does not attend my taking. You have no conception," he said, "of the perils I have run, in merely making my way from the little apartment to the drawing-room. The Joys are all in full cry after the men. The first corner I turned, I encountered Anne; she laid violent hands on me: I walked on—came to a window, there hung Harriet half-way out; she attacked me: I walked on—got to the house-door, there was Susan, waiting to catch the unwary; she seized on me: I walked on—got up stairs, there was Martha in waiting:

I know not by what miracle I escaped violation there: she seized on my hand, to shake hands with me; then she pulled me towards her, and the strapping wench is as strong as a horse; it required all my force to break away from her; however, I escaped ravishing, and got to the drawing-room door; there stood Ellen, but, luckily for my virtue, she had seized on Williams, and was talking to him, telling him how anxious she was to be married, but she had not much hopes any body would have her; but she hoped he would often come over to Stubb Hall, and see them: they should always be delighted to see him: she seemed to have half a mind to lay violent hands on me, but I slipped in at the door, so quick I eluded her grasp; if Fate had her worst prank in store for me, I thought I should stumble on the old Hag, in the drawing-room; have escaped five Scylla's, and at

last be lost in Charybdis: but here I am safe and sound."

"We shall see fine work with them this evening, at the ball," said Mr. Hatton.—"Pat and Sue are the two worst, they are really too bad to bring into company: the mother should tie them to the bed-post, and flog them, and keep them on bread and water. But she is a great fool; sometimes they go into private lodgings, to try to get the men more to themselves; and they are inventing all sorts of excuses to make errands for gentlemen, and write notes to them. I should not be surprised if Mrs. Goodlad said something curious to them. She is a plain-dealer.

Martha Joy staid on the look-out, at the top of the stairs, till at last Mr. Hill came down to go out a walking. Martha immediately seized on his arm, and kept fast hold on him, so as to defy all his efforts to

shake her off; so he was obliged to submit to have her for a walking companion: his only revenge was to trail her over hedge and ditch, over bush and brier, over the mountains, and over the moors. No leech, no tick, no bur, ever stuck closer: he had all this time to listen to her details of how hopeless she was to get married: she had given up all hopes of three years. "Then why do you not renounce the society of the male sex?" said Mr. Hill. "Oh!" she said, "somebody at last may take pity on me, if I try every body: and I hope my brother won't marry, then I can live with him, and not be driven to that most forlorn of all states, an old maid in a country town."— "Now, really," said Mr. Hill, "I think you five might live very comfortably at Chesterfield: it is in a beautiful country." "But then it is so disagreeable to be an old maid," said Martha. "Oh!" said Mr. Hill, "assume more dignity: say men are

such base, perjured, profligate wretches, your purity could not think of allying with them; if men forsake you, say you forsake them: never put yourself in their way, and then it cannot be said, the grapes are sour." "Now I am sure," said Martha, "if I was as handsome as Miss Canning, you would be in love with me." "I shall not promise you I should," said Mr. Hill. "Well, I wish I was like Miss Canning," said Martha. "You have much to acquire," he replied, "before you can, in any wise, resemble Miss Canning." And by this time he had got her back to the house, and, as a *dernier ressort* to shake her off, he took refuge in the gentleman's little apartment. That still was sacred: the Misses Joy had not got to pursuing gentlemen there, yet."

The gentlemen found it the safest way to escape the Joy's hanging about them wherever they went, to go about in large parties; and they managed so adroitly this morning,

that Martha was the only one who could effect fastening herself upon any one. At the ball they were determined to act on the defensive: when the five Misses Joy entered the ball-room arm-in-arm, their eyes all glared upon all the gentlemen at once. Mr. Hatton exclaimed, "Avaunt, and quit my sight; thou *hast speculation* in thine eye, that thou dost glare withal." These poor damsels, in distress, were giving the gentlemen all sorts of hints, to ask them to dance, in vain; the president was obliged to take them in tow, and go begging amongst the refuse of the gentlemen, to get them to dance with these virgins. Dr. Bolus, the physician, gracefully led the beautiful Anne through the mazy dance: and Harriet was so fortunate as to be led out by Mr. Fanshawe, who only picked his nose twice, while he was dancing. Mr. Apozem, the apothecary, at Wirksworth, exercised Ellen in the dance, and Mr. Key, curate of Crom-

ford, edified Martha by being her partner. Susan still hung on hand: she had been asking Messrs. Hill, Williams, the Marquis and all she thought would dance; but all were engaged, or had sprained ancles;—when, by great good luck, a cockney from the New Bath arrived, Mr. Jerry Spriggins. The president immediately led him up to Susan, and thus they were all accommodated with partners.

Mr. Jerry Spriggins thought from the very kind manners of his partner, she must come from the streets of London: so he said, "Miss, I suppose you are a Lunnoner." "No!" said Susan, "I live in this neighbourhood." "Then, you do not do much business in the winter, Miss?"—"No!" said Susan, "we are quite buried in the winter. Stubb Hall is such a nasty lonesome place, we see nobody then. I hope you will come often and see us. I will write a note to you as soon as we get

back. You shall have plenty of fruit and cream if you will come and see us; it is so disagreeable to live in such a place, there is so little chance of getting married;—if it was not for coming here, we should hardly see any men." "No, Miss!" said he, "men grow very scarce, and very shy, now-a-days." "That they do, indeed," said Susan.

The Misses Joy had a quality of smelling very strong when they were heated with dancing, something resembling the smell of a goat; and now being all in motion, in a hot evening, the smell was of *haut gout*, and did not add to their popularity with the gentlemen. Some were talking loudly near them of the advantages of warm bathing, and the healthiness of frequent change of linen. Martha had squeezed herself in the dance next to Miss Canning, because Mr. Hill was dancing with her; but Mr. Hill

had such a dose of her in the morning, he was very *sèche*.

Susan contrived to entrap Mr. Jerry Spriggins into a promise to dance again with her in the course of the evening: he did not know what to think of his partner: from the first *coup d'œil* he had of her, he took her for an inhabitant of the Strand, or the purlieus of Covent-Garden, or Drury-Lane. Her conversation quite bewildered him. She talked of their being such an old family, and spoke with such contempt of some of their neighbours, who were just sprung from a dunghill; and she had four sisters so greatly married: there was Mrs. Fenton, the great banker's wife; and Mrs. Pudap, the great upholsterer's wife: nothing could equal their grandeur. Mr. Pudap had an aunt who wore diamonds, and would have been presented if it had not been for a shocking accident. "What—did she break

her leg, Miss?" "No!" said Susan, "but she wanted very much to go to court, and her next door neighbour was Lady Mayoress, and she asked Mrs. Layard to let her go as her companion; and Mrs. Layard consulted Lady Ermine if she might take the Dowager, Mrs. Pudap. Lady Ermine gave it as her opinion she might do so. The Dowager, Mrs. Pudap, got such a beautiful court-dress made, and put on all her diamonds, and went with Mrs. Layard, and when they got to St. James's, the lord-in-waiting had not been spoken to, and the Dowager, Mrs. Pudap, could not be presented, or else Mr. Pudap would have had an aunt who had been at court." "I remember that name in Lonnon," said Mr. Jerry Spriggins, "the shop is in Oxford-street." "Oh! he don't live at his shop," said Susan, "he has a great house in Kent, you can't think how it's furnished: you shall see a picture of his house when you come

to Stubb Hall. Mr. Spriggins was apprentice to a linen-draper in London, and thought he might get some custom from the family, so he determined to go over to Stubb Hall.

When the two first dances were over, Martha hung about Mr. Hill, but he resisted all her solicitations to dance: then she began teazing him to ride with her next morning; he resisted some time, but at last he found there was no end to her importunity, and he thought the shortest way was to acquiesce; so he said he would ride next morning at ten with her. The beaux the Misses Joy had danced with not being popular amongst the *aimables*, they were prevailed upon to ring changes upon them for the evening; and they were so sharp set, they were glad of any one.

Susan hung so about Mr. Jerry Spriggins, that Mrs. Goodlad went up to her, and congratulated her upon the return of her long absent brother. " My brother is at Dover,'

said Susan." "Then who is that young man you are so fond of?" said she, "I thought it must be a long absent brother, who had been abroad some years, and perhaps been a prisoner, that you were so overjoyed to see him again; why you've almost been in his lap, while you were sitting down." This speech, and the cast of her eye she gave Susan while she spoke, overset the gravity of the Marquis of Worthrop; he joined Mrs. Goodlad, and said, "That was an excellent reproof you gave that amorous girl." "Had she been my girl," said Mrs. Goodlad, "instead of words, she should have had blows: I have no patience with such cattish minxes; and the mother sits like an old fool, and sees and encourages them. She will never get them off in any way, they are too poor for wives, and too ugly for mistresses; she had better keep them at home to make their own chemises, and knit their own stockings."

"It is a pity you have no daughters, Mrs. Goodlad, to shew us what women ought to be." "There is plenty," she said, "to shew us what they ought not to be." The Marquis said, "Susan had been asking him to lend them his landaulet the next morning, to take her, Harriet, Ellen, and Anne, Messrs. Spriggins and Apozem, to Dovedale; three were to go in the inside, and three in the barouche seat: but he did not like to have such a party in his carriage; he thought it lowering the dignity of the carriage." "True, my Lord," said Mrs. Goodlad, "the carriage would get the name of the dog-cart, after such a party had been in it." "What!" said the Marquis, "because Spriggins and Apozem are puppies." "Yes," replied Mrs. Goodlad, "and saving your Lordship's presence, the ladies are another description of dog." "Very good! very good! Mrs. Goodlad," said his lordship, "very smart indeed; I

owe you one for that." This *jeu d'esprit* was repeated to the gentlemen, and gained Mrs. Goodlad much applause.

The widow Beddington now brushed up, and joined the Marquis and Mrs. Goodlad, and said to the former, "Did your Lordship know my friend Mrs. Hallet at Cambridge?" The Marquis said, "He had not that honour." "Poor woman!" said Mrs. Beddington, "my heart bleeds for her: I have had such an affecting letter from her: her daughter Wilhelmina Charlotta is almost broken-hearted, at a disappointment in love. Mr. Beaumont, the son of a gentleman of large fortune in Devonshire, visited a great deal at Mr. Hallet's; they have a large family, and hardly know how to live. Miss Hallets are rather particular dressers, wear scarlet pelisses, bonnets, and half boots; and people are so ill-natured, as they walk about a great deal in the streets, to say they look like the scarlet ——, I

can't speak the word, that lived at Babylon in days of yore. But I can assure you they are sweet amiable girls, and have great sensibility; and poor Wilhelmina Charlotta fell passionately in love with Mr. Beaumont, which would have been a great match for her; and that old churl of a father, hearing how much his son was with Miss Hallet, sent for him away from College; and he went very readily, but poor Wilhelmina Charlotta was broken-hearted; she could read nothing but the Sorrows of Werter, and the Delicate Distress, and the Woes of the Heart, and such affecting works; and wept so, Mrs. Hallet says she is sure a pipkin would not have held her tears; so it was agreed she and her mother should follow Mr. Beaumont into Devonshire; that was a great hardship to be drove to this extremity, for they find difficulty enough to live, and this was a journey of near four hundred miles; but if it brought about the match, it

answered, and was worth trying; and they could not suppose the father would have such a heart of iron. I have heard of a man in an iron mask, but this Mr. Beaumont has a heart of iron. So down Mrs. Hallet and Wilhelmina Charlotta went to Axminster, and there the axe was laid to her heart. They sent for young Beaumont to come to them; this brute of a father heard of it, came to the inn and took this young man into his carriage; it was now or never with Wilhelmina Charlotta; she hung about the wheels. 'If you tear away my love,' said she, 'you shall drive over me;' then she ran and embraced the horses, and hung about their necks, in the frenzy of despair. 'If you draw away my love,' said she, 'you shall first crush this agonized frame.' The mob collected: look, look, at the mad woman, they said, and the Constable seized her, while poor Mrs. Hallet stood by, like Niobe, all tears." "It was a most moving

scene; it should have been a moving scene, had I been there," said Mrs. Goodlad, "and Wilhelmina Charlotta, my daughter, I should have moved her up to the bed-post, tied her there, and given her a good flogging; kept her on bread and water for a fortnight; she should have been blooded twice a week, and made a dozen of shirts in the fortnight's discipline; and I should have saved the father the expense of the journey, for my daughter should not have gone on such a worse than fool's errand. I dare say you think Miss Data Quantitas, who went up to London upon the strength of an anonymous letter to marry she did not know who, was very ill-used to find nobody at the inn to meet her, and it was all a hum: I think mothers and daughters most to blame on such occasions: I have not much sympathy for *such* disappointments in love."

Mrs. Beddington felt the cap fit too tight to be pleased, and began to look enraged;

and the Marquis, to avert the coming storm, knowing Mrs. Goodlad could bear a joke, said, "Upon my word, my good friend, you are quite marble-hearted; what with your marble heart, and Mr. Beaumont's iron heart, what destruction will fall upon love affairs. If you and Mr. Beaumont marry, I dare say your children will be made to employ themselves usefully: your sons will be warriors, lawyers, or divines; your daughters good wives, good mothers, and dutiful children; formed after the model of Lady Rachael Russel, instead of Lady Vane." "There, my Lord," Mrs. Goodlad said, "you speak of a woman her sex should be proud of; of a warm affectionate heart to her husband and children; yet suppressed her own agonies, to arm her husband with fortitude, to support an untimely and ignominious death; and suppressed her own keen anguish on the death of one beloved daughter in child-bed, not to endanger

the life of the other in the same situation. Her subdued feelings could reply, with an unchanged voice, to the living daughter's affectionate inquiries after her dead sister, 'She is well, I have seen her out of bed to day.' She spoke truth; for this beloved relic of a fondly loved husband, she had that morning seen in her coffin. Oh! my Lord, when I think of such a woman, and Wilhelmina Charlotta hanging about the horses' necks and the wheels, I ask, can such belong to the same class of beings?"

Mrs. Beddington felt so disconcerted at this philippic against love-sick Misses, that she walked away, and the Marquis applauded Mrs. Goodlad for the excellent sentiments she spoke.

Mrs. Beddington found Sensibility had been much talked of at the last ball, for being *si bien rougé*; so this evening she had put on none: so she now brushed up to Dr. Stukely, and said, "Do look at my poor

pale-faced daughter, I am quite miserable about her; what can be the matter with her?" "I suppose she has got the gripes," the Dr. replied; "you had better give her a dose of rhubarb." Mrs. Beddington went to various people, to call their attention to her poor pale-faced daughter: she commonly had so sweet a colour; she must be in alarming health: "Perhaps in love," said Mr. Hatton, "with her green and yellow melancholy."

Mrs. Joy went and seated herself by Dr. Stukeley, and to impress him with an idea of her consequence, she pretended to be much acquainted with the Marquis of Worthrop, and informed the Dr. he was parted from his wife. The Dr. knew sure enough he was parted from his wife, but it was by death; but he would not undeceive her, for he thought they would all fasten, like famished flies, upon the Marquis, if they had an idea he was at liberty; so he asked,

"Where the Marchioness lived now?" "With her father," was the reply. "If he was at liberty," said the Dr., "I should congratulate Mrs. Goodlad, for he is very sweet upon her: she is a very entertaining woman, and says very shrewd things."

Martha Joy now bolted out of the room to tie up her garter. The Marquis said, "Is that a *finesse* to make her partner run after her, or is her garter coming down?" "Oh! I dare say her garter is coming down," said Mrs. Goodlad, "I observe loose women always have loose garters; you never find a modest woman with her garter wanting tying up twenty times a day; and such girls always have their garters loose; you won't see Miss Canning bolting out to tie up her garter." The Marquis went up to Mr. Fanshawe, and told him, "He should follow his partner, and offer to tie up her garter for her." "No," said he, "I've had enough of the girl; I begin

to be alarmed for my virtue; she won't keep at all. Their eyes are so large, and they are always glaring about upon all the men in the room; and there is not a man in the room but is sick of them."

Ten o'clock came next morning, and no Mr. Hill came near Martha Joy; she waited in her private parlour till eleven, and then out she bolted in quest of Mr. Hill; she soon met with his servant, and him she catechized where his master was: "Just gone out of walking with Miss Canning," was the reply. This was quite a thunder stroke; "Which way is he gone?" said the petrified Martha; the servant directed her, and away strided the indignant Martha, and soon overtook Mr. Hill and Miss Canning: to the former she said, *sans ceremonie*, "You promised to ride with me this morning;" he replied, "You see I am walking with Miss Canning;" "Yes, but you must ride with me," said the forsaken Martha. "I can-

not," said Mr. Hill, coolly, "you see I am engaged." "But you shall ride with me," said Martha; "I cannot, I tell you," said Hill. Martha was resolute; such an insult should not be offered to her charms, as to suffer Miss Canning to go off in triumph with the charming Hill; and she again repeated, "But you shall ride with me." "If I must ride with you," said Hill, "it must be after dinner, I am engaged now." That would not satisfy Martha, she wanted to get him away from Miss Canning; so she insisted "he should ride with her before dinner." Mr. Hill found there was no possibility of getting rid of her, but to acquiesce; so he said he would ride with her at one, turned his back upon her, walked on with Miss Canning: they took a long walk in Critch valley, and Martha was left in the lurch.

"Such animals are much to be pitied," said Miss Canning; "they cannot resign

themselves to celibacy, yet have not a chance of marriage: they are too old and ugly for the East Indies: there is not a place they have a chance in, yet they come here every year, and plague all the gentlemen as bad as the plagues of Egypt." "They are too bad to quiz," said Mr. Hill, "Miss Beddingtons are more amusing; you cannot make love to these wenches, even in a joke: these people try, as they cannot get lovers themselves, to break off matches; they are as jealous as a cat of you." "The Joys relate two curious disappointments in love," said Miss Canning; "they know, as well as others, the men never intended to have them: it suited the swains to board at the house for a time, and the Misses gave out they were going to be married; if they could accomplish the matter, well; if not, they thought it would give an *eclat* to say how ill they had been used; and how near being married they had been.

The joke was carried so far with one, that the mother told a confectioner she should want a wedding cake *soon*; but she never committed herself by ordering a cake, or buying clothes: and the farce of the disappointment was highly ludicrous; there was crying and dancing at a ball, to announce to the world the match was at an end."

Mrs. Goodlad was quite a nuisance to Susan Joy, for she had such unlucky eyes she saw every thing. Susan had teased Jerry Spriggins into a promise, the night before at the ball, to walk with her; and for fear, if he came up to the Old Bath, some other sharp-set Miss might seize upon him, Susan told him she would come to the New Bath for him: so after breakfast, away trooped Susan to the new Bath Hotel, and was so fortunate as to seize upon, and secure Jerry Spriggins, for a walking companion; and Susan took him where she thought they should meet nobody; and had got him be-

hind a hedge, and gave him a kiss; and just at that juncture pops Mrs. Goodlad upon them. "Oh! what your brother's come back," said Mrs. Goodlad." "I a'nt Miss Joy's brother, I assure you, ma'am," said Jerry Spriggins; "but Miss took such a fancy to me from the first, and as she wants somebody to kiss, I let her kiss me." Mrs. Goodlad shook her head at Susan, and said, "It is well for you, you are not my daughter." "Oh!" said Susan, "it was such a *chaste kiss* I gave him: our mother is not such a ridiculous prude; she lets men kiss us, and pull us about; we've fine work in our parlour sometimes, I promise you: when Mr. Spriggins comes to Stubb Hall, he'll see what we can do." "Your mother should take you into Scotland; she might get you married there; in England you have no chance." "Oh!" said Susan, "if we try for every man we see, we may get husbands at last; I've no notion of being

mealy-mouthed." "So I perceive," said Mrs. Goodlad, and turned her back to them, and pursued her walk.

There was an addition made to the company at dinner, Monsieur and Madame Pouqueville, and Mrs. Martha Matthisson. The Marquis, Dr. Stukeley, and Mr. Hatton, were sitting together when they entered the drawing-room. The Dr. said, "Asmodeus, I must have the history of this group." Mr. Hatton replied, "The outlandish gentleman and lady I can tell you nothing about: Mrs. Martha Matthisson is quite a character, she is a complete bull-dog; whatever she is, she must be violent in: once Mr. Pitt was her idol, his picture was placed at the foot of her bed, to be the first object seen on waking; she was brought up in the church; after a time, when the hopes of lovers subsided, and single ladies wanted a resource for the mind, she turned Presbyterian, by way of *something* to do;

then she became a democrat: whilst she was turning, Mr. Pitt's picture was turned the back outwards; but as the democratic fever increased, the picture was turned out of her room. She had now her hands full of business; she was a presbyterian, a democrat, a spouter at political meetings, a leader of mobs at elections; the friend of Thelwall. When that whimsey had had its day, then she forsook the meeting, and became a free-thinker, and for some years frequented no place of worship. This was a cruel blow to the presbytery; great had been their exultation over the church in their proselyte; but she forsook the meeting, and had no religion: then the church exulted, and said, 'See the effect of your proselytism.' After some years, for the sake of variety, she again went to church, saying, she thought it right to conform to the form of worship of the country she lived in."

"It is a favourite lounge with forlorn

damsels," said Dr. Stukeley, "to change their religious opinions: it is something, *pour passer le tems.* When the gall rises to the utmost excess, and quarrelling with, and defaming fellow-mortals is not sufficient for the unbounded acrimony within them; to deride their Redeemer must be vast consolation. "I could relate some instances of that," said Mr. Hatton, but such profaneness is better buried in oblivion. God has borne with her with patience. Let man, erring man, follow the example. She had a narrow escape of her life once, sheltering a democrat from an enraged mob. He fled to her, and she hid him under her bed; had the mob found him out, the pulling down the house had been the probable consequence. Had she served him as Jael served Sisera, I could hardly have blamed her.

"Her favourite pastime now is, to flatter herself that in the next world she is to have the awarding of rewards and punishments. Buonaparte she places in the highest heaven

—he is the purest of mortals. One of her sisters she has sent to hell for objecting to one of her darling friends of the presbytery visiting at the house. He is what is commonly called an infamous character. Mrs. Martha insists upon it he is one of the most cruelly injured of men; his character is spotless as Buonaparte's. It is expected, as she is given to change, that her next metamorphosis will be into a flaming Methodist preacher: that she will go about the country, as beggar Sue did, in days of yore, and thunder down her congregation to hell.—But as Buonaparte and Dr. Damper are two of her greatest saints, I think there are few who would not prefer the society of her hell to that of her heaven.

"I will read you a love scene out of her last novel. You must know," continued Mr. Hatton, "she never had a lover; and has no idea what love is: that is, she takes her ideas of it, from what she overhears of cats making love: and, in her lovers' cater-

wauling, there is as much cursing and swearing, as in a whole county meeting of cats." Mr. Hatton here took a book out of his pocket, the title, he said, is the 'Triumph of Ugliness,' or, 'the History of Charles Meadows,' who went mad for the inflexible and ugly Amelia Damper. The description of the lady is, she was five feet high, with so enormous a posterity, that a lady who was following her up stairs, was going to apprehend her for a thief, supposing she had stolen a sack of potatoes, and hid it under her petticoats. Her neck was of the same enormous size. Her face with light grey eyes, enormous black eye-brows, that nearly met; a long nose, with such a sneer, that it looked as if the owner wished to suspend, all whom she viewed, upon her nose: the mouth of this lovely paragon was very much under-jawed; and her chin enriched with a beard. Who could behold this angelic creature, and not be madly in love?—Charles Meadows was distracted for her:

he could not keep away from her. One day that he was in the most ardent pursuit of her, burning with love, the following dia logue took place:

'Charles. "My adored Amelia!—why do you fly me?"—

'Amelia. "Curse the hour I first saw you!"

'Charles. "When will you listen to my ardent love?"

'Amelia. "What the devil do you ask me for?"

"This frantic lover was determined not to live without his adored Amelia; and as she continued inflexible, he was resolved to kill himself: at the Methodist Meeting in Tottenham-court-road, was his *coup d'essai.* Amelia looked so killing; he could live no longer; and hastily snatching a knife from his pocket, he plunged it into his heart.—Amelia rapped out an oath; the congregation stood aghast: the preacher, by great good luck, had got a phial of balsam of fiery-brass in his pocket: gave Charles a few

drops; and, in the twinkling of an eye, he was as well as ever again. This encouraged him so much in suicide, that he three times dashed from the top of a rock, into the sea: five times he cut his throat; and nine times stabbed himself to the heart; but always had the good luck to find somebody at hand with balsam of fiery-brass in their pocket. At last Charles and Amelia met at a great rout at the Cape of Good Hope. Amelia was just rising from the card-table, where she had won her rubber, and got paid, so she was in high good humour; sees Charles, runs up to him, clasps her arms round his neck, and says, "D—— you, Charles, how do you do?" He was in ecstasies: all the company were so hot, and so happy: for it was Madame Vanderspanker's great assembly, and all the world at it: they interested themselves for the lovers, and Amelia *swore* she would love him for ever: and assured all the company she was certain, they should be *damnably* happy.

"A very excellent cat's courtship," said Dr. Stukeley."

"What an unique pair of lovers," said the Marquis. "Mrs. Martha certainly strikes out into a new line of novel-writing; that is, new to those, who are not frequenters of alehouses in Wapping. If Mrs. Beddington takes her daughters to a pot-house in Wapping to give them new ideas, I imagine they will hear such love scenes."

"*Cœtera desunt*," said Mr. Hatton, shutting the book, "really I can read no more of such a swearing reprobate wretch, and I see the doors flying open to announce dinner; a far better thing than such love."

"You bachelors," said the Marquis, "only think of cupboard love."

When the company were seated at table, Dr. Stukeley observed an enormously fat man at the bottom of the table, and inquired of Mr. Hatton who he was. "He calls himself a gentleman," Mr. Hatton replied,—"but to call all things by their right names,

I believe a blackleg would come nearer the truth. He is now going to York races, and he goes about to all the races in the kingdom." By good luck he was seated by Susan Joy, and asked her if she had been at Newmarket races: she said "No!" "I never miss them," he said. There was such a race once between Johnny and Shark: it rained as if heaven and earth would come together: there was a man drowned opposite the Greyhound, and you could see nothing; and after all, there was Johnny coming alone. Did you ever see Belcher and Crib fight, Miss?" Susan said, "No!" "Belcher is a prince of a boxer. His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland was so pleased with him, he told me to give him half-a-crown. So, soon after, Miss, he made such a calling after me, Massey, Massey, where's Massey? So, I said, 'here, Your Royal Highness, have you any commands for me?' So, he said, 'Have you given Belcher the half crown?'

"Yes! please Your Royal Highness," I said, "I gave him half-a-crown for you, and three shillings for myself; so to be sure this made a great laugh. Did you ever drink any ramjam, Miss?" "No!" Susan again replied. "Nor Hock my Jock, mayhap?" Susan Joy said "She did not know what he was talking about." "Then I suppose," Mr. Massey said, "you never were at the ramjam house. Why, it stands on the north road: always stop when I come to that house for some ale. Why, ma'am, there is twenty sorts of the finest ale in the kingdom. There is Ramjam, Hock my Jock, Old Surly, and then the two strongest are Knock me Down, and Strike me Dead. Charming ale, it makes a man dry to look at it; and then you sleep like a top after a good swig.

"Now, Miss, I dare say you like to play at quadrille; people make such a talking at it; there is spadille, manille, and Cato." "I have played with Mr. Wigsby,

but I like whist best." "Do you know Mr. Summers, ma'am?" Susan said, she had never heard of him. "Why, he is a famous jockey; nice little light weight," and turning to Monsieur Pouqueville, he said, "Why, she's a poor creature, I dare say she never betted a guinea in her life."

Mr. Massey having eat an enormous quantity of goose, said, "he must drink a glass of brandy to settle it." "I call brandy Latin for a goose, Miss; you had better have a sup; I always make it a rule where I dine, there I sup. Now would you believe it, Miss, I went last week to call upon Miss Moreland at six o'clock in the morning, and would you believe it, she was not up? Ladies require so much sleep: I always get up at four. Miss Morland has nice spirits; full of spirits as an egg is full of meat. But ma'am, when I'm in Lunnon, I'm then quite genteel, and keep the Lunnon hours; I assure you, I never dine till two o'clock.

"Mayhap you don't know Lord Aberguilly: I hope he will give my son a living; and so the last time I was in Lunnon, he had a living vacant, and that little man Mr. Wren, was applying for it; so I called upon my Lord, and to shew him, I knew how to be genteel, and to keep the Lunnon hours, I never went there till eleven; and I said, my Lord, I hope you will not let me be beat by that little man: he is a nice jockey spoilt; he should never have been made a parson of, he'd have been a prince of jockeys; but as I hope to be saved, Lord Aberguilly never asked me to eat or drink."

Mrs. Martha Matthisson kept turning up her nose at the company, and spoke to no one. Dr. Stukeley said to Mr. Hatton, "that poor creature has got some grievous bad smell under her nose; is it herself, or her neighbour, or any thing at the table?" Mr. Hatton replied, "You know the old saying, the fox is the finder."

"She is a person," said Mr. Hatton, "deserves no mercy, for she is a very mischievous character; she writes anonymous letters, and verses to people, and sets others writing anonymous letters to those she wants to plague; she deserves no mercy, for she has been a famous tormentor of old maids: now she must take her turn; she has never shewn any mercy to characters, except those of the blackest die; therefore, if she is paid with the measure she has meted out to others, she will not stand much fairer than her dear friend Buonaparte, and her no less dear Dr. Damper; she is very much like Bridgetina, and is by some thought to have sat for that character."

Happily for the company, Mrs. Martha Matthisson disliked all she saw at Matlock; and the party packed off again before dinner; so they were saved any anonymous attacks or bull-dog work from her.

END OF VOL. II.

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